

REPRESENTATIVE
ENGLISH
POEMS

with old

Harrap's Modern English Series

REPRESENTATIVE
ENGLISH POEMS

Accr 39907

MODERN ENGLISH SERIES

ESSAYS OF TO-DAY

Edited by F. H. PRITCHARD. 288 pages.

SHORT STORIES OF TO-DAY

Edited by J. W. MARRIOTT. 294 pages.

ONE-ACT PLAYS OF TO-DAY

Edited by J. W. MARRIOTT. Six Volumes—
Series I to VI.

BYGONE ENGLAND

Edited by W. H. CORNISH. 286 pages.

NARRATIVE ESSAYS AND SKETCHES

Edited by H. A. TREBLE, M.A., and G. H.
VALLINS, B.A. 296 pages.

A TREASURY OF VERSE

Edited by D. M. STUART. 236 pages.

LETTERS OF HORACE WALPOLE

Edited by D. M. STUART. 236 pages.

HUMOUR OF TO-DAY

Edited by F. H. PRITCHARD. 240 pages.

THE DIARY OF MR PEPYS

Edited by H. A. TREBLE, M.A. 288 pages.

SHORT STORIES OF YESTERDAY

Edited by F. H. PRITCHARD. 298 pages.

LONGER ENGLISH POEMS

Edited by BEN R. GIBBS, B.A. 286 pages.

DANTE AND HIS POETRY

By MARY BRADFORD WHITING. 218 pages.

THE ENGLISH NOVEL

By JOHN MADDISON, B.A., and KENNETH
GARWOOD, B.A. 288 pages.

VALIANT DEEDS IN LIFE AND LITERATURE

By G. F. LAMB, M.A. 240 pages.

UNITED STATES AND UNITED KINGDOM

By G. F. LAMB, M.A. 248 pages.

TEN SELECTED ONE-ACT PLAYS

Edited by MAX H. FULLER, M.A. 272 pages.

THE TWENTIETH-CENTURY DRAMA

By LYNTON HUDSON, B.A. 224 pages.

TALES OF HUMAN ENDEAVOUR—An Anthology

Edited by G. F. LAMB, M.A. 228 pages.

MORE SELECTED ONE-ACT PLAYS

Chosen by MAX H. FULLER, M.A. 278 pages.

A STEVENSON TREASURY

Selected and edited by F. GREENE, B.A. 224
pages.

OTHER PEOPLE'S LIVES—An Anthology.

Edited by G. F. LAMB, M.A. 224 pages.

ALL OVER THE WORLD—An Anthology of Travel

Edited by G. F. LAMB, M.A. 224 pages.

CALL TO ADVENTURE—An Anthology.

Edited by A. R. MOON, M.A., A.K.C., and J.
EDMUNDSON, M.C. 224 pages.

THE HARRAP BOOK OF MODERN ESSAYS

Edited by LIONEL GOUGH, M.A. 160 pages.

ENGLISH ESSAYS

Selected for reading in School by J. B. SKINNER,
M.A., and DAVID RINTOUL, Ph.D. 224 pages.

REPRESENTATIVE ENGLISH POEMS

FOR USE IN SENIOR CLASSES OF
SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

SELECTED BY
A. J. COOMBES B.A.



GEORGE G. HARRAP & CO. LTD.
LONDON TORONTO WELLINGTON SYDNEY

First published in Great Britain July 1930
by GEORGE G. HARRAP & CO. LTD.
182 High Holborn, London, W.C.1

Reprinted: October 1934; August 1937;
August 1939; April 1941;
November 1941; October 1943;
February 1946; December 1953;
June 1955

Copyright. *All rights reserved*

PREFACE

IN making this group of selections the aim in view has been to provide students in the senior classes of secondary schools with a series of poems and extracts which will illustrate the leading figures in the course of English poetry from Chaucer downward through five hundred years of its development. When one bears in mind that the majority of secondary students enter upon careers which do not take them forward to the universities, it seems all the more desirable that within their course they should make first-hand acquaintance with some of the characteristic works of the greatest of our poets. Lyrical and shorter narrative poems rightly occupy a prominent place in the greater part of a student's secondary schooling; and the literary tastes thereby fostered will certainly benefit where the horizons are widened to admit of at least samples of longer narrative, descriptive, epic, reflective, satiric, and didactic verse. A wide variety, therefore, has been provided in the poems within these pages, expressed in as wide a variety of verse forms.

The authors have been arranged in chronological order, for it has been felt that the impression of continuity in poetic development, with all its change in tone and temper and form and outlook, is rendered more real on such a plan. The dates accompanying the various poems indicate the actual or approximate

year of composition, which does not in many instances coincide with that of their first publication.

Thanks are due to Messrs John Murray for permission to reprint "Such a starved bank of moss," from *The Two Poets of Croisic*, and "Epilogue," from *Asolando*, by Robert Browning.

A. J. C.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
From "The Canterbury Tales"	
The Prologue <i>Chaucer</i>	13
Early Sonnets	
Mye Love to Skorne <i>Wyatt</i>	22
Spring <i>Surrey</i>	23
From "Astrophel and Stella," No.	
XXVII <i>Sidney</i>	23
From "The Shepheard's Calender"	
October <i>Spenser</i>	24
From "The Faerie Queene"	
The Bower of Bliss <i>Spenser</i>	28
From "Amoretti"	
No. XLVII <i>Spenser</i>	32
No. LXVII "	33
Epithalamion <i>Spenser</i>	33
From "Tamburlaine," Part I	
Prologue <i>Marlowe</i>	43
Tamburlaine's Ambition "	43
High Astounding Terms "	44
What is Beauty? "	45
From "Tamburlaine," Part II	
Death of Zenocrate <i>Marlowe</i>	47
Four Sonnets	
No. XXIX <i>Shakespeare</i>	50
No. XXX "	51
No. CIV "	51
No. CXVI "	52
Twelve Songs	
Winter <i>Shakespeare</i>	52

	PAGE
Fairy Lullaby	<i>Shakespeare</i> . 53
The Greenwood	" . 54
Ingratitude	" . 54
Sweet and Twenty	" . 55
A Dirge	" . 55
Take, O, take those Lips away	" . 56
A Morning Song	" . 56
Fidele	" . 57
A Fairy Dance	" . 58
Sea-change	" . 58
Fairy Liberty	" . 58
A Fairy Quarrel	<i>Shakespeare</i> . 59
A Remonstrance	<i>Shakespeare</i> . 63
Three Farewells	
Romeo and Juliet	<i>Shakespeare</i> . 65
Othello	" . 67
Prospero	" . 68
L'Allegro	<i>Milton</i> . 70
Lycidas	<i>Milton</i> . 73
Sonnet: On his Blindness	<i>Milton</i> . 79
From "Paradise Lost"	
Satan reaches Paradise	<i>Milton</i> . 79
Within Paradise	" . 80
Evening in Paradise	" . 81
Eve's Bower	" . 82
The Serpent	" . 82
The Forbidden Tree	" . 84
The Fruit	" . 85
Adam	" . 86
From "Absalom and Achitophel"	
Shaftesbury	<i>Dryden</i> . 89
Buckingham	" . 90
Mac Flecknoe	<i>Dryden</i> . 91
From "The Rape of the Lock"	
Ariel and Belinda	<i>Pope</i> . 95

	PAGE
The Lock	<i>Pope</i> 98
The Attendant Sylphs	„ 99
A Game of Cards	„ 100
The Rape	„ 102
Belinda's Distress	„ 103
The Combat	„ 104
The Fate of the Lock	„ 106
From "The Seasons"	
Summer	<i>Thomson</i> 107
Sonnet: On the Death of Richard West	<i>Gray</i> 112
Elegy written in a Country Church-yard	<i>Gray</i> 112
The Progress of Poesy	<i>Gray</i> 117
Ode to Evening	<i>Collins</i> 121
The Passions	<i>Collins</i> 123
The Deserted Village	<i>Goldsmith</i> 126
From "Poetical Sketches"	
To Spring	<i>Blake</i> 136
To Summer	„ 137
To Morning	„ 138
The Prince of Love	„ 138
Despair	„ 139
From "Songs of Innocence"	
Introduction	<i>Blake</i> 139
A Cradle Song	„ 140
A Dream	„ 141
From "Songs of Experience"	
Introduction	<i>Blake</i> 142
The Tiger	„ 143
The Angel	„ 144
To a Mouse	<i>Burns</i> 144
The Banks o' Doon	<i>Burns</i> 146
Farewell to Nancy	<i>Burns</i> 147
The Red, Red Rose	<i>Burns</i> 148

	PAGE
Bannockburn	<i>Burns</i> . . . 148
For a' that and a' that	<i>Burns</i> . . . 149
From "The Task"	
A Rural Landscape	<i>Cowper</i> . . . 151
The Poet dislikes Town-life	" . . . 151
Man's Inhumanity to Man	" . . . 152
A Patriotic Reflection	" . . . 154
The Freeman	" . . . 155
The Spirit of Nature	" . . . 156
Winter	" . . . 158
Kubla Khan	<i>Coleridge</i> . . . 160
Christabel, Part I	<i>Coleridge</i> . . . 162
Tintern Abbey	<i>Wordsworth</i> . . . 172
Sonnet: On Milton	<i>Wordsworth</i> . . . 177
Character of the Happy Warrior	<i>Wordsworth</i> . . . 177
Ode on the Intimations of Immor- tality	<i>Wordsworth</i> . . . 180
From "Marmion"	
The Battle of Flodden	<i>Scott</i> . . . 186
From "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage"	
Departure	<i>Byron</i> . . . 192
Greece	" . . . 195
Waterloo	" . . . 197
Lake Geneva	" . . . 199
Venice	" . . . 202
The Coliseum	" . . . 203
The Ocean	" . . . 205
Sonnet to Homer	<i>Keats</i> . . . 206
Ode to Autumn	<i>Keats</i> . . . 208
Ode to a Nightingale	<i>Keats</i> . . . 209
The Eve of St Agnes	<i>Keats</i> . . . 211
Ozymandias of Egypt	<i>Shelley</i> . . . 225
Adonais	<i>Shelley</i> . . . 225
The Lotos-eaters	<i>Tennyson</i> . . . 243
Morte d'Arthur	<i>Tennyson</i> . . . 249

	PAGE
Songs from "The Princess"	
The Splendour Falls	<i>Tennyson</i> . 257
Come down, O Maid	,, . 258
The Forsaken Merman	<i>Arnold</i> . 259
Sonnet: Shakespeare	<i>Arnold</i> . 263
From "Pippa Passes"	
Prologue	<i>Browning</i> . 264
Pippa's Songs	,, . 270
Love among the Ruins	<i>Browning</i> . 271
From "The Two Poets of Croisic"	
Lyric	<i>Browning</i> . 274
From "Asolando"	
Epilogue	<i>Browning</i> . 275
Notes 277

REPRESENTATIVE ENGLISH POEMS

From "The Canterbury Tales"

The Prologue

WHAN that Aprille with his shoures soote
The droghte of March hath perced to the roote,
And bathed every veyne in swich licour
Of which vertu engendred is the flour;
Whan Zephirus eek with his swete breeth
Inspired hath in every holt and heeth
The tendre croppes, and the yonge sonne
Hath in the Ram his halfe cours y-ronne,
And smale foweles maken melodye,
That slepen al the nyght with open eye—
So priketh hem Nature in hir corages—
Thanne longen folk to goon on pilgrimages,
And palmeres for to seken straunge strondes,
To ferne halwes, cawthe in sondry londes;
And specially, from every shires ende
Of Engelond, to Caunturbury they wende,
The hooly blisful martir for to seke,
That hem hath holpen whan that they were seeke.

10

Bifil that in that seson on a day,
In Southwerk at the Tabard as I lay,
Redy to wenden on my pilgrymage
To Caunterbury with ful devout corage,
At nyght were come into that hostelrye
Wel nyne and twenty in a compaignye,
Of sondry folk, by aventure y-falle
In felaweshipe, and pilgrimes were they alle,

20

That toward Caunterbury wolden ryde.
The chambres and the stables weren wyde,
And wel we weren esed atte beste.
30 And shortly, whan the sonne was to reste,
So hadde I spoken with hem everychon
That I was of hir felaweshipe anon,
And made forward erly for to ryse,
To take oure wey, ther as I yow devyse.

But nathelees, whil I have tyme and space,
Er that I ferther in this tale pace,
Me thynketh it acordaunt to resoun
To telle yow al the condicioun
Of ech of hem, so as it semed me,
40 And whiche they weren and of what degree,
And eek in what array that they were inne;
And at a Knyght than wol I first bigynne.

THE KNIGHT

A KNYGHT ther was, and that a worthy man,
That fro the tyme that he first bigan
To riden out, he loved chivalrie,
Trouthe and honour, fredom and curteisie.
Ful worthy was he in his lordes werre,
And therto hadde he riden, no man ferre,
As wel in cristendom as in hethenesse,
50 And ever honoured for his worthynesse.
At Alisaundre he was whan it was wonne;
Ful ofte tyme he hadde the bord bigonne
Aboven alle nacions in Pruce.
In Lettow hadde he reysed and in Ruce,
No cristen man so ofte of his degree.
In Gernade at the seege eek hadde he be
Of Algezir, and riden in Belmarye.
At Lyey was he, and at Satalye,
Whan they were wonne; and in the Grete See
60 At many a noble armee hadde he be.

At mortal batailles hadde he been fiftene,
And foughten for oure feith at Tramysse
In lystes thries, and ay slayn his foo.
This ilke worthy knyght hadde been also
Somtyme with the lord of Palatye
Agayn another hethen in Turkye :
And everemoore he hadde a sovereyn prys,
And though that he were worthy, he was wys,
And of his port as meeke as is a mayde.
He never yet no vileynye ne sayde
In al his lyf, unto no maner wight.
He was a verray parfit gentil knyght.

70

THE SQUIRE

With hym ther was his sone, a yong SQUIER,
A lovyere and a lusty bacheler,
With lokkes crulle as they were leyd in presse.
Of twenty yeer of age he was, I gesse.
Of his stature he was of evene lengthe,
And wonderly delyvere, and greet of strengthe.
And he hadde been somtyme in chyvachie
In Flaundres, in Artoys, and Pycardie,
And born hym weel, as of so litel space,
In hope to stonden in his lady grace.
Embrouded was he, as it were a meede
Al ful of fresshe floures whyte and reede ;
Syngynge he was, or floytynge, al the day ;
He was as fressh as is the monthe of May.
Short was his gowne, with sleeves long and wyde ;
Wel koude he sitte on hors and faire ryde ;
He koude songes make and wel endite,
Juste, and eek daunce and weel purtreye and write. 90
So hoote he lovede that by nyghtertale
He sleep namoore than dooth a nyghtyngale.
Curteis he was, lowely, and servysable,
And carf biform his fader at the table.

80

THE PRIORESS

Ther was also a Nonne, a PRIORESSE,
That of hir smylyng was ful symple and coy;
Hire gretteste ooth was but by seinte Loy,
And she was cleped madam Eglentyne.
Ful weel she soong the service dyvyne,
100 Entuned in hir nose ful semely,
And Frenssh she spak ful faire and fetisly,
After the scole of Stratford-atte-Bowe,
For Frenssh of Parys was to hire unknowe.
At mete wel y-taught was she withalle;
She leet no morsel from hir lippes falle,
Ne wette hir fyngres in hir sauce depe.
Wel koude she carie a morsel, and wel kepe
That no drope ne fille upon hire brest.
In curteisie was set ful muchel hir lest.
110 Hire over-lippe wyped she so clene,
That in hir coppe ther was no ferthyng sene
Of grece, whan she dronken hadde hir draughte.
Ful semely after hir mete she raughte,
And sikerly she was of greet desport,
And ful plesaunt, and amyable of port,
And peyned hire to countrefete cheere
Of court, and been estatlich of manere,
And to ben holden digne of reverence.
But for to speken of hire conscience,
120 She was so charitable and so pitous
She wolde wepe, if that she saugh a mous
Kaught in a trappe, if it were deed or bledde.
Of smale houndes hadde she, that she fedde
With rosted flessch, or milk and wastel breed;
But soore wepte she if oon of hem were deed,
Or if men smoot it with a yerde smerte:
And al was conscience and tendre herte.
Ful semyly hir wympul pynched was;
Hire nose tretys, hir eyen greye as glas,

Hir mouth ful smal, and ther-to softe and reed; 130
But sikerly she hadde a fair forheed,
It was almoost a spanne brood, I trowe;
For, hardily, she was nat undergrowe.
Ful fetys was hir cloke, as I was war;
Of smal coral aboute hire arm she bar
A peire of bedes, gauded al with grene;
And theron heng a brooch of gold ful sheene,
On which ther was first write a crowned A,
And after, *Amor vincit omnia*.

THE CLERK

A CLERK ther was of Oxenford also, 140
That unto logyk hadde long y-go.
As leene was his hors as is a rake,
And he nas nat right fat, I undertake,
But looked holwe, and ther-to sobrelly.
Ful thredbare was his overeste courtepy,
For he hadde geten hym yet no benefice,
Ne was so worldly for to have office;
For hym was levere have at his beddes heed
Twenty bookes clad in blak or reed
Of Aristotle and his philosophie, 150
Than robes riche, or fithele, or gay sautrie.
But al be that he was a philosophre,
Yet hadde he but litel gold in cofre;
But al that he myghte of his freendes hente
On bookes and his lernynge he it spente,
And bisily gan for the soules preye
Of hem that yaf hym wherwith to scoleye.
Of studie took he moost cure and moost heede.
Noght o word spak he moore than was neede,
And that was seyde in forme and reverence, 160
And short and quyk and ful of hy sentence.
Sownynge in moral vertu was his speche,
And gladly wolde he lerne and gladly teche.

THE POOR PARSON

A good man was ther of religioun,
And was a poure PERSON of a toun;
But riche he was of hooly thought and werk;
He was also a lerned man, a clerk,
That Cristes gospel trewely wolde preche;
His parisshe devoutly wolde he teche.
170 Benygne he was, and wonder diligent,
And in adversitee ful pacient;
And swich he was y-preved ofte sithes.
Ful looth were hym to cursen for his tithes,
But rather wolde he yeven, out of doute,
Unto his poure parisshe aboute
Of his offryng and eek of his substaunce;
He koude in litel thyng have suffisaunce.
Wyd was his parisshe, and houses fer asonder,
But he ne lafte nat, for reyn ne thonder,
180 In siknesse nor in meschief to visite
The ferreste in his parisshe, muche and lite,
Upon his feet, and in his hand a staf.
This noble ensample to his sheepe he yaf,
That firste he wroghte and afterward he taughte.
Out of the gospel he tho wordes caughte,
And this figure he added eek therto,
That if gold ruste, what shal iren doo?
For if a preest be foul, on whom we truste,
No wonder is a lewed man to ruste;
190 Wel oghte a preest ensample for to yive
By his clenness how that his sheepe sholde lyve.
He sette nat his benefice to hyre,
And leet his sheepe encombred in the myre,
And ran to London, unto Seint Poules,
To seken hym a chaunterie for soules;
Or with a bretherhed to been withholde;
But dwelte at hoom and kepte wel his folde,
So that the wolf ne made it nat myscarie,—

He was a shepherde, and noght a mercenarie ;
 And though he hooly were and vertuous, 200
 He was to synful man nat despitous,
 Ne of his speche daungerous ne digne,
 But in his techyng descreeet and benygne ;
 To drawen folk to hevene by fairnesse,
 By good ensample, this was his bisynesse :
 But it were any persone obstinat,
 What so he were, of heigh or lough estat,
 Hym wolde he snybben sharply for the nonys.
 A bettre preest I trowe that nowher noon ys ;
 He wayted after no pompe and reverence, 210
 Ne maked him a spiced conscience,
 But Cristes loore, and his apostles twelve,
 He taughte, but first he folwed it hymselfe.

THE HOST

A semely man oure HOOSTE was withalle
 For to han been a marchal in an halle.
 A large man he was, with eyen stepe,
 A fairer burgeys is ther noon in Chepe :
 Boold of his speche, and wys, and wel ytaught,
 And of manhod hym lakkede right naught.
 Eek therto he was right a myrie man, 220
 And after soper pleyen he bigan,
 And spak of myrthe amonges othere thynges,
 Whan that we hadde maad our rekenynges ;
 And seyde thus : “ Now, lordynges, trewely,
 Ye been to me right welcome, hertely ;
 For by my trouthe, if that I shal nat lye,
 I ne saugh this yeer so myrie a compaignye
 At ones in this herberwe as is now.
 Fayn wolde I doon yow myrthe, wiste I how.
 And of a myrthe I am right now bythoght, 230
 To doon yow ese, and it shal coste noght.
 “ Ye goon to Canterbury—God yow speede,

The blisful martir quite yow youre meede.
And, wel I woot, as ye goon by the weye,
Ye shapen yow to talen and to pleye;
For trewely confort ne myrthe is noon
To ride by the weye doumb as a stoon;
And therfore wol I maken yow disport,
As I seyde erst, and doon yow som confort.
240 And if you liketh alle, by oon assent,
Now for to stonden at my juggement,
And for to werken as I shal yow seye,
Tomorwe, whan ye riden by the weye,
Now, by my fader soule, that is deed,
But ye be myrie, I wol yeve yow myn heed.
Hould up youre hond, withouten moore speche.”

Oure conseil was nat longe for to seche;
Us thoughte it was noght worth to make it wys,
And graunted him withouten moore avys,
250 And bad him seye his verdit, as hym leste.

“Lordynges,” quod he, “now herkneth for the
beste;

But taak it nought, I prey yow, in desdeyn;
This is the poynt, to speken short and pleyn,
That ech of yow, to shorte with your weye,
In this viage, shal telle tales tweye—
To Caunterbury-ward, I mene it so,
And homward he shall tellen othere two—
Of adventures that whilom han bifalle.
And which of yow that bereth hym beste of alle,
260 That is to seyn, that telleth in this caas
Tales of best sentence and moost solaaas,
Shal have a soper at oure aller cost,
Heere in this place, sittynge by this post,
Whan that we come agayn fro Caunterbury.
And for to make yow the moore mury,
I wol myselfen gladly with yow ryde,
Right at myn owene cost, and be youre gyde.
And whoso wole my juggement withseye

Shal paye al that we spenden by the weye.
And if ye vouchesauf that it be so,
Tel me anon, withouten wordes mo,
And I wol erly shape me therfore."

270

This thyng was graunted, and oure othes swore
With ful glad herte, and preyden hym also
That he would vouchesauf for to do so,
And that he wolde been oure governour,
And of our tales juge and reportour,
And sette a soper at a certeyn pris,
And we wol reuled been at his devys
In heigh and lough; and thus, by oon assent,
We been accorded to his juggement.
And therupon the wyn was fet anon;
We dronken, and to reste wente echon,
Withouten any lenger tarynge.

280

Amorwe, when that day gan for to sprynge,
Up roos oure Hooste and was oure aller cok,
And gadrede us togidre alle in a flock,
And forth we riden, a litel moore than paas,
Unto the wateryng of Seint Thomas.

GEOFFREY CHAUCER, *about* 1386

GLOSSARY

amorwe, on the morrow.
aventure, chance.
bifil, it befell.
bord, table.
bretherhed, a religious brotherhood.
brood, broad.
burgeys, burgess, citizen.
caas, circumstance.
chaunterie, an endowment for singing masses for the dead.
chyvachie, an expedition.
cleped, named.
cofre, coffer, treasury.
corage, heart.
courtepy, a cloak.
cowthe, known.
crulle, curled.
delyvere, active.
despitous, scornful.

desport, pleasantry.
digne, worthy, haughty.
echon, each one.
embrouded, embroidered.
endite, write, compose.
erst, at first.
estatlich, stately.
ferne, ancient, distant.
ferreste, farthest.
ferthyng, morsel.
fet, brought
fetisly, neatly.
fithele, fiddle.
floytynge, fluting.
halwes, saints, shrines.
hente, seized.
herberwe, harbour, inn.
holwe, hollow.
hote, hotly.

leste, it pleased, pleasure.
levere, sooner.
lewed, ignorant.
lite, small.
lokkes, locks of hair.
meede, meadow.
muchel, greatly.
myrie, merry.
nonys, for the occasion.
nyghtertale, night-time.
paas, walking-pace.
parisshens, parishioners.
port, demeanour.
purtreye, draw.
pynched, closely pleated.
raughte, reached.
reysed, gone on a military expedition.
sautrie, a small harp.
scoleye, to attend school.

sikerly, certainly.
sithes, times.
snybben, snub, reprove.
soote, sweet.
sownynge, tending to.
stepe, bright.
stonden, to stand well.
suffisaunce, enough.
talen, to tell tales.
tretys, finely shaped.
wastel breed, cake of fine flour.
werre, war.
wympul, head-covering.
y-falle, fallen.
y-preved, proved.
y-ronne, run.
yaf, gave.
yerde, stick.
yeven, given.

Early Sonnets

Mye Love to Skorne

MYE love to skorne, my servise to retaine,
 Therein, me thought, she usid crueltie,
 Since with good will I lost my libretye,
 To followe her wich causeth all my payne.
 Might never care cause me for to refrayne,
 But onlye this wich is extremytie,
 Gyving me nought, alas, nor to agre
 That as I was her man, I might remayne.
 But since that thus ye list to ordre me,
 That wolde have bene your servaunt true and
 10 faste,
 Displese thee not, my doting dayes bee paste,
 And with my losse to leve I must agre.
 For as there is a certeyne tyme to rage,
 So ys ther tyme suche madnes to aswage.

SIR THOMAS WYATT, *about* 1530

Spring

The soote season, that bud and bloom forth brings,
With green hath clad the hill, and eke the vale :
The nightingale with feathers new she sings ;
The turtle to her mate hath told her tale ;
Summer is come, for every spray now springs ;
The hart hath hung his old head on the pale ; 20
The buck in brake his winter coat he flings ;
The fishes float with new-repaired scale ;
The adder all her slough away she slings ;
The swift swallow pursueth the flies smale ;
The busy bee her honey now she mings ;
Winter is worn that was the flowers' bale.
And thus I see among these pleasant things
Each care decays, and yet my sorrow springs.

THE EARL OF SURREY, *about* 1540

From "Astrophel and Stella"

SONNET No. XXVII

Because I oft in darke abstracted guise,
Seeme most alone in greatest company, 30
With dearth of words, and aunswers quite awry,
To them that would make naked speech arise ;
They deeme, and of their doome the rumor flies,
That poyson foule of bubling pride doth lie
So in my swelling breast, that onely I
Faune on myselfe, all others doe dispise :
Yet pride, I thinke, doth not my soule possesse,
Which lookes too oft in this unflattering glasse,
But one worse fault, ambition I confesse,
That makes me oft my best freendes over-passe, 40
Unseene, unheard, while thought to highest place
Bends all his powers, even unto Stellas grace.

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY, *about* 1580

The Shepherd's Calender

October

PIERS. CUDDIE.

Piers. Cuddie, for shame ! hold up thy heavye head,
And let us cast with what delight to chace,
And weary thys long lingring Phoebus' race.
Whilome thou wont the shepherds' laddes to leade
In rymes, in ridles, and in bydding base ;
Now they in thee, and thou in sleepe, art dead.

Cuddie. Piers, I have pyped erst so long with payne,
That all mine Oten reedes bene rent and wore,
And my poore Muse hath spent her spared store,
10 Yet little good hath got, and much lesse gayne.
Such pleasaunce makes the Grashopper so poore,
And ligge so layd, when Winter doth her straine.

The dapper ditties, that I wont devise,
To feede youthes fancie, and the flocking fry,
Delighten much ; what I the bett for-thy ?
They han the pleasure, I a sclender prise ;
I beate the bush, the byrds to them doe flye :
What good thereof to Cuddie can arise ?

Piers. Cuddie, the prayse is better then the price,
20 The glory eke much greater then the gayne :
O ! what an honor is it, to restraine
The lust of lawless youth with good advice,
Or pricke them forth with pleasaunce of thy vaine,
Whereto thou list their trayned willes entice.

Soone as thou gynst to sette thy notes in frame,
O, how the rurall routes to thee doe cleave !
Seemeth thou dost their soule of sence bereave ;
All as the shepherd that did fetch his dame
From Plutoes balefull bowre withouten leave ;
30 His musicks might the hellish hound did tame.

Cuddie. So praysen babes the Peacoks spotted traine,
And wondren at bright Argus blazing eye;
But who rewards him ere the more for-thy,
Or feedes him once the fuller by a graine?
Sike prayse is smoke, that sheddeth in the skye;
Sike words bene wynd, and wasten soone in vayne.

Piers. Abandon, then, the base and viler clowne;
Lyft up thy selfe out of the lowly dust,
And sing of bloody Mars, of wars, of giusts;
Turne thee to those that weld the awful crowne, 40
To doubted Knights whose woundlesse armour rusts,
And helmes unbrused wexen dayly browne.

There may thy Muse display her fluttryng wing,
And stretch herselfe at large from East to West;
Whether thou list in fayre Elisa rest,
Or, if thee please in bigger notes to sing,
Advaunce the worthy whome shee loveth best,
That first the white beare to the stake did bring.

And, when the stubborne stroke of stronger stounds
Has somewhat slackt the tenor of thy string, 50
Of love and lustihead then mayst thou sing,
And carroll lowde, and leade the Myllers rownde,
All were Elisa one of thilke same ring;
So mought our Cuddies name to heaven sownde.

Cuddie. Indeede the Romish Tityrus, I heare,
Through his Mecænas left his Oaten reede,
Whereon he earst had taught his flocks to feede,
And laboured lands to yield the timely eare,
And eft did sing of warres and deadly drede,
So as the heavens did quake his verse to here. 60

But ah! Mecænas is yclad in claye,
And great Augustus long ygoe is dead,
And all the worthies ligen wrapt in leade,
That matter made for Poets on to play:

For ever, who in derring-doe were dreade,
The loftie verse of hem was loved aye.

But after vertue gan for age to stoope,
And mightie manhode brought a bedde of ease,
The vaunting Poets found nought worth a pease
70 To put in preace emong the learned troupe :
Tho gan the streames of flowing wittes to cease,
And sonne-bright honour pend in shamefull coupe.

And if that any buddes of Poesie,
Yet of the old stocke, gan to shoote agayne,
Or it mens follies mote be forst to fayne,
And rolle with rest in rymes of rybaudrye ;
Or, as it sprong, it wither must agayne :
Tom Piper makes us better melodie.

Piers. O pierlesse Poesye ! where is then thy place ?
80 If not in Princes pallace thou doe sitt,
(And yet is Princes pallace the most fitt)
Ne brest of baser birth doth thee embrace,
Then make thee winges of thine aspyring wit,
And, whence thou camst, flye backe to heaven apace.

Cuddie. Ah, Percy ! it is all to weake and wanne,
So high to sore and make so large a flight ;
Her peeched pyneons bene not so in plight :
For Colin fittes such famous flight to scanne ;
He, were he not with love so ill bedight,
90 Would mount as high and sing as soote as Swanne.

Piers. Ah, fon ! for love does teach him climbe so
hie,
And lyftes him up out of the loathsome myre :
Such immortal mirrhor, as he doth admire,
Would rayse ones mynd above the starry skie,
And cause a caytive corage to aspire ;
For lofty love doth loath a lowly eye.

Cuddie. All otherwise the state of Poet stands ;
 For lordly love is such a Tyranne fell,
 That where he rules all power he doth expell ;
 The vaunted verse a vacant head demaundes, 100
 Ne wont with crabbed care the Muses dwell :
 Unwisely weaves, that takes two webbes in hand.

Who ever casts to compasse weightye prise,
 And thinkes to throwe out thundring words of threate,
 Let powre in lavish cups and thriftie bitts of meate,
 For Bacchus fruite is frend to Phœbus wise ;
 And when with Wine the braine begins to sweate,
 The numbers flowe as fast as spring doth ryse.

Thou kenst not, Percie, howe the ryme should rage,
 O ! if my temples were distaind with wine, 110
 And girt in girlonds of wild Yvie twine,
 How I could reare the Muse on stately stage,
 And teache her tread aloft in buskin fine,
 With queint Bellona in her equipage !

But ah ! my corage cooles ere it be warme :
 For-thy content us in this humble shade,
 Where no such troublous tydes han us assayde ;
 Here we our slender pypes may safely charme.

Piers. And, when my gates shall han their young
 down layd,
 Cuddie shall have a Kidde to store his farme. 120

EDMUND SPENSER, 1579

GLOSSARY

bett, better.

bydding-base, a game, prisoners' base.

corage, heart.

coupe, coop, pen.

dapper, neat, pretty.

derring-doe, feats of chivalry.

doubted, redoubted.

earst, *erst*, before, formerly.

eft, afterward.

fon, foolish fellow.

for-thy, therefore.

gates, goats.

layd, faint.

ligge, lie.

lustihead, pleasure.

mote, must.

*peece*d, imperfect.

preace, a crowd.

sike, such.

soote, sweet.

stounds, efforts.

tho, then.

trayned, snared, captured.

From "The Faerie Queene"

BOOK II, CANTO XII

The Bower of Bliss

EFTSOONES they heard a most melodious sound,
Of all that mote delight a daintie eare
Such as attonce might not on living ground,
Save in this Paradise, be heard elsewhere :
Right hard it was for wight, which did it heare,
To read what manner musicke that mote bee ;
For all that pleasing is to living eare
Was there consorted in one harmonee ;
Birdes, voices, instruments, windes, waters, all agree :

10 The joyous birdes, shrouded in chearefull shade,
Their notes unto the voyce attempred sweet ;
Th' Angelicall soft trembling voyces made
To th' instruments divine respondence meet ;
The silver sounding instruments did meet
With the base murmure of the waters fall ;
The waters fall with difference discreet,
Now soft, now loud, unto the wind did call ;
The gentle warbling wind low answered to all.

20 The whiles some one did chaunt this lovely lay ;
"Ah ! see, whoso fayre thing doest faine to see,
In springing flowre the image of thy day !
Ah ! see the Virgin Rose, how sweetly shee
Doth first peepe foorth with bashfull modestee,
That fairer seemes, the lesse ye see her may ;
Lo ! see soone after, how more bold and free
Her bared bosome she doth broad display ;
Lo ! see soone after, how she fades, and falls away.

"So passeth, in the passing of a day,
Of mortall life the leafe, the bud, the flowre ;

Ne more doth flourish after first decay, 30
 That earst was sought to decke both bed and bowre
 Of many a Ladie, and many a Paramowre!
 Gather therefore the Rose, whilst yet is prime,
 For soone comes age, that will her pride deflowre :
 Gather the Rose of love, whilst yet is time,
 Whilst loving thou mayst loved be with equall
 crime."

He ceast; and then gan all the quire of birdes
 Their diverse notes t' attune unto his lay,
 As in approvance of his pleasing words.
 The constant paire heard all that he did say, 40
 Yet swarved not, but kept their forward way
 Through many covert groves and thickets close,
 In which they creeping did at last display
 That wanton lady, with her lover lose,
 Whose sleepe head she in her lap did soft dispose.

.
 The young man, sleeping by her, seemd to be
 Some goodly swayne of honorable place,
 That certes it great pittie was to see
 Him his nobility so foule deface :
 A sweet regard and amiable grace, 50
 Mixed with manly sternesse did appeare,
 Yet sleeping, in his well-proportioned face;
 And on his tender lips the downy heare
 Did now but freshly spring, and silken blossomes beare.

His warlike armes, the idle instruments
 Of sleeping praise, were hong upon a tree;
 And his brave shield, full of old moniments,
 Was fowly ras't, that none the signes might see;
 Ne for them, ne for honour cared hee,
 Ne ought that did to his advancement tend; 60
 But in lewd loves, and wastfull luxuree,

His dayes, his goods, his bodie he did spend :
O horrible enchantment, that him so did blend !

The noble Elfe and carefull Palmer drew
So nigh them, minding nought but idle game,
That suddein forth they on them rusht, and threw
A subtile net, which only for that same
The skilfull Palmer formally did frame :
So held them under fast, the whiles the rest
70 Fled all away for feare of fowler shame.
The faire Enchauntresse, so unawares opprest,
Tryde all her arts and all her sleights thence out to
wrest.

And eke her lover strove ; but all in vaine ;
For that same net so cunningly was wound,
That neither guile nor force might it distraine.
They tooke them both, and both them strongly
bound

In captive bandes, which there they readie found :
But her in chaines of adamant he tyde ;
For nothing else might keepe her safe and sound :
80 But Verdant (so he hight) he soone untyde,
And counsell sage in steed thereof to him applyde.

But all those pleasaunt bowres and Pallace brave,
Guyon broke downe with rigour pittillesse :
Ne ought their goodly workmanship might save
Them from the tempest of his wrathfulnesse,
But that their blisse he turn'd to balefulnesse,
Their groves he feld, their gardins did deface,
Their arbers spoyld, their Cabinets suppresses,
Their banquet houses burne, their buildings race,
90 And of the fayrest late, now made the fowlest place.

Then led they her away, and eke that knight
They with them led, both sorrowfull and sad :

The way they came, the same retourn'd they right,
Till they arrived, where they lately had
Charm'd those wild beasts, that rag'd with furie
mad;

Which, now awaking, fierce at them gan fly,
As in their mistresse reskew, whom they lad;
But them the Palmer soone did pacify.
Then Guyon askt, what meant those beastes, which
there did ly.

Said he : "These seeming beasts are men indeed, 100
Whom this Enchauntresse hath transformed thus,
Whylome her lovers, which her lusts did feed,
Now turned into figures hideous,
According to their mindes like monstrous."
"Sad end," quoth he, "of life intemperate,
And mournfull meed of joyes delicious!
But, Palmer, if it mote thee so aggrate,
Let them returned be unto their former state."

Streightway he with his vertuous staffe them
strooke,
And streight of beasts they comely men became; 110
Yet being men they did unmanly looke,
And stared ghastly; some for inward shame,
And some for wrath, to see their captive Dame :
But one above the rest in speciall,
That had an hog beene late, hight Grille by name,
Repined greatly, and did him miscall,
That had from hoggish forme him brought to
naturall.

Said Guyon : "See the mind of beastly man,
That hath so soone forgot the excellence
Of his creation, when he life began, 120
That now he chooseth with vile difference
To be a beast, and lacke intelligence!"

To whom the Palmer thus : "The donghill kinde
 Delights in filth and foule incontinence :
 Let Grill be Grill, and have his hoggish minde :
 But let us hence depart, whilest wether serves and
 winde."

EDMUND SPENSER, 1589

GLOSSARY

aggrate, to please.
banket, banquet.
cabinets, little cabins.
crime, reproach, fault.
distraine, rend.
hight, named.

lad, led.
moniments, records.
ras't, erased.
subtile, fine-spun.
whylome, formerly.
wight, person, individual.

From "Amoretti"

Sonnet No. XLVII

TRUST not the treason of those smyling lookes,
 Untill ye have theyr guylefull traynes well tryde ;
 For they are lyke but unto golden hookes,
 That from the foolish fish theyr bayts doe hyde :
 So she with flattring smyles weake harts doth guyde
 Unto her love, and tempte to theyr decay ;
 Whome, being caught, she kills with cruell pryde,
 And feeds at pleasure on the wretched pray :
 Yet, even whylst her bloody hands them slay,
 10 Her eyes looke lovely, and upon them smyle ;
 That they take pleasure in her cruell play,
 And, dying, doe themselves of payne beguyle.
 O mighty charm ! which makes men love theyr
 bane,
 And thinck they dy with pleasure, live with payne.

Sonnet No. LXVII

Lyke as a huntsman after weary chace,
Seeing the game from him escapt away,
Sits downe to rest him in some shady place,
With panting hounds beguyled of their pray :
So, after long pursuit and vaine assay,
When I all weary had the chace forsooke,
The gentle deare returnd the selfe-same way,
Thinking to quench her thirst at the next brooke ;
There she, beholding me with mylder looke,
Sought not to fly, but fearlesse still did bide ;
Till I in hand her yet halfe trembling tooke,
And with her owne goodwill hir fymely tyde.

Strange thing, me seemd, to see a beast so wyld
So goodly wonne, with her owne will beguyld.

EDMUND SPENSER, 1593

Epithalamion

YE learned sisters, which have oftentimes
Beene to me ayding, others to adorne,
Whom ye thought worthy of your gracefull rymes,
That even the greatest did not greatly scorne
To heare theyr names sung in your simple layes,
But joyed in theyr praise ;
And when ye list your owne mishaps to mourne,
Which death, or love, or fortunes wreck did rayse,
Your string could soone to sadder tenor turne,
And teach the woods and waters to lament
Your dolefull dreriment ;
Now lay those sorrowfull complaints aside,
And, having all your heads with girlands crownd,
Helpe me mine owne loves prayes to resound ;
Ne let the same of any be envide :
So Orpheus did for his owne bride !

So I unto my selfe alone will sing;
The woods shall to me answer, and my eccho ring.

Early, before the worlds light-giving lampe
20 His golden beame upon the hils doth spread,
Having disperst the nights unchearefull dampe,
Doe ye awake; and, with fresh lusty-hed,
Go to the bowre of my beloved love,
My truest turtle-dove;
Bid her awake; for Hymen is awake,
And long since ready forth his maske to move,
With his bright Tead that flames with many a flake,
And many a bachelor to waite on him,
In theyr fresh garments trim.
30 Bid her awake therefore, and soone her dight,
For lo! the wished day is come at last,
That shall, for all the paynes and sorrowes past,
Pay to her usury of long delight:
And, whylest she doth her dight,
Doe ye to her of joy and solace sing,
That all the woods may answer, and your eccho ring.

Bring with you all the Nymphes that you can heare
Both of the rivers and the forrests greene,
And of the sea that neighbours to her neare;
40 Al with gay girlands goodly wel beseene.
And let them also with them bring in hand
Another gay girland
For my fayre love, of lillyes and of roses,
Bound truelove wize, with a blew silke riband,
And let them make great store of bridale poses,
And let them eeke bring store of other flowers,
To deck the bridale bowres.
And let the ground whereas her foot shall tread,
For feare the stones her tender foot should wrong,
50 Be strewed with fragrant flowers all along,
And diapred lyke the discolored mead.

Which done, doe at her chamber dore awayt,
For she will waken strayt ;
The whyles doe ye this song unto her sing,
The woods shall to you answer, and your Eccho ring.

Ye Nymphes of Mulla, which with carefull heed
The silver scaly trouts doe tend full well,
And greedy pikes which use therein to feed ;
(Those trouts and pikes all others doe excell ;) 60
And ye likewise, which keepe the rushy lake,
Where none doe fishes take ;
Bynd up the locks the which hang scattered light,
And in his waters, which your mirror make,
Behold your faces as the christall bright,
That when you come whereas my love doth lie,
No blemish she may spie.
And eke, ye lightfoot mayds, which keepe the deere,
That on the hoary mountayne used to towre ;
And the wylde wolves, which seeke them to devoure,
With your steele darts doe chace from comming neer ; 70
Be also present heere,
To helpe to decke her, and to help to sing,
That all the woods may answer, and your eccho ring.

Wake now, my love, awake ! for it is time ;
The Rosy Morne long since left Tithones bed,
All ready to her silver coche to clyme ;
And Phœbus gins to show his glorious hed.
Hark ! how the cheerefull birds do chaunt theyr laies
And carroll of Loves praise.
The merry Larke hir mattins sings aloft ; 80
The Thrush replyes ; the Mavis descant playes ;
The Ouzell shrills ; the Ruddock warbles soft ;
So goodly all agree, with sweet consent,
To this dayes merriment.
Ah ! my deare love, why doe ye sleepe thus long,
When meeter were that ye should now awake,

T'awayt the comming of your joyous make,
And hearken to the birds love-learned song,
The deawy leaves among !
90 For they of joy and pleasance to you sing,
That all the woods them answer, and theyr eccho ring.

My love is now awake out of her dreames,
And her fayre eyes, like stars that dimmed were
With darksome cloud, now show theyr goodly beams
More bright than Hesperus his head doth rere.
Come now, ye damzels, daughters of delight,
Helpe quickly her to dight :
But first come, ye fayre houres, which were begot
In Joves sweet paradise, of Day and Night ;
100 Which doe the seasons of the yeare allot,
And al, that ever in this world is fayre,
Doe make and still repayre :
And ye three handmayds of the Cyprian Queene,
The which doe still adorne her beauties pride,
Helpe to addorne my beautifullest bride :
And, as ye her array, still throw betweene
Some graces to be seene ;
And, as ye use to Venus, to her sing
The whiles the woods shal answer, and your eccho
ring.

110 Now is my love all ready forth to come :
Let all the virgins therefore well awayt :
And ye fresh boyes, that tend upon her groome,
Prepare yourselves ; for he is comming strayt.
Set all your things in seemely good array,
Fit for so joyfull day,
The joyfulst day that ever sunne did see.
Faire Sun ! shew forth thy favourable ray,
And let thy lifull heat not fervent be,
For feare of burning her sunshyny face,
120 Her beauty to disgrace.

O fayrest Phœbus! father of the Muse!
If ever I did honour thee aright,
Or sing the thing that mote thy mind delight,
Doe not thy servants simple boone refuse;
But let this day, let this one day, be myne;
Let all the rest be thine,
Then I thy soverayne prayses loud will sing,
That all the woods shal answer, and theyr eccho ring.

Harke! how the Minstrils gin to shrill aloud
Their merry Musick that resounds from far, 130
The pipe, the tabor, and the trembling Croud,
That well agree withouten breach or jar.
But, most of all, the Damzels doe delite
When they their tymbrels smyte,
And thereunto do daunce and carrol sweet,
That all the sences they doe ravish quite;
The whyles the boyes run up and downe the street,
Crying aloud with strong confused noyce,
As if it were one voyce,
Hymen, io Hymen, Hymen, they do shout; 140
That even to the heavens theyr shouting shrill
Doth reach, and all the firmament doth fill;
To which the people standing all about,
As in approvance, doe thereto applaud,
And loud advaunce her laud;
And evermore they Hymen, Hymen, sing,
That all the woods them answer, and theyr eccho ring.

Loe! where she comes along with portly pace,
Lyke Phœbe, from her chamber of the East,
Arysing forth to run her mighty race, 150
Clad all in white, that seemes a virgin best.
So well it her beseemes, that ye would weene
Some angell she had beene.
Her long loose yellow locks lyke golden wyre,
Sprinckled with perle, and perling flowres atweene,

Doe lyke a golden mantle her attyre;
And, being crowned with a girland greene,
Seeme lyke some mayden Queene.
Her modest eyes, abashed to behold
160 So many gazers as on her do stare,
Upon the lowly ground affixed are;
Ne dare lift up her countenance too bold,
But blush to heare her prayses sung so loud,
So farre from being proud.
Nathlesse doe ye still loud her prayses sing,
That all the woods may answer, and your eccho ring.

Tell me, ye merchaunts daughters, did ye see
So fayre a creature in your towne before;
So sweet, so lovely, and so mild as she,
170 Adornd with beautyes grace and vertues store?
Her goodly eyes lyke Saphyres shining bright,
Her forehead yvory white,
Her cheekes lyke apples which the sun hath rudded,
Her lips lyke cherries charming men to byte,
Her brest like to a bowle of creame uncrudded,
Her paps like lyllies budded,
Her snowie necke lyke to a marble towre;
And all her body like a pallace fayre,
Ascending up, with many a stately stayre,
180 To honors seat and chastities sweet bowre.
Why stand ye still, ye virgins, in amaze,
Upon her so to gaze,
Whiles ye forget your former lay to sing,
To which the woods did answer, and your eccho ring?

But if ye saw that which no eyes can see,
The inward beauty of her lively spright,
Garnisht with heavenly guifts of high degree,
Much more then would ye wonder at that sight,
And stand astonisht lyke to those which red
190 Medusaes mazeful hed.

There dwels sweet love, and constant chastity,
Unspotted fayth, and comely womanhood,
Regard of honour, and mild modesty ;
There vertue raynes as Queene in royal throne,
And giveth lawes alone,
The which the base affections doe obay,
And yeeld theyr services unto her will ;
Ne thought of thing uncomely ever may
Thereto approach to tempt her mind to ill.
Had ye once seene these her celestial treasures, 200
And unrevealed pleasures,
Then would ye wonder, and her praises sing,
That all the woods should answer, and your echo ring.

Open the temple gates unto my love,
Open them wide that she may enter in,
And all the postes adorne as doth behove,
And all the pillours deck with girlands trim,
For to receyve this Saynt with honour dew,
That commeth in to you.
With trembling steps, and humble reverence, 210
She cometh in, before th' Almightyes view ;
Of her ye virgins learne obedience,
When so ye come into those holy places,
To humble your proud faces :
Bring her up to th' high altar, that she may
The sacred ceremonies there partake,
The which do endlesse matrimony make,
And let the roring Organs loudly play
The praises of the Lord in lively notes ;
The whiles, with hollow throates, 220
The Choristers the joyous Antheme sing,
That al the woods may answeare, and their eccho ring.

Behold, while she before the altar stands,
Hearing the holy priest that to her speakes,
And blesseth her with his two happy hands,

How the red roses flush up in her cheekes,
 And the pure snow, with goodly vermill stayne
 Like crimsin dyde in grayne :
 That even th' Angels, wich continually
 230 About the sacred Altare doe remaine,
 Forget their service and about her fly,
 Ofte peeping in her face, that seems more fayre,
 The more they on it stare.
 But her sad eyes, still fastened on the ground,
 Are governed with goodly modesty,
 That suffers not one looke to glaunce awry,
 Which may let in a little thought unsownd.
 Why blush ye, love, to give to me your hand,
 The pledge of all our band !
 240 Sing, ye sweet Angels, Alleluya sing,
 That all the woods may answere, and your eccho ring.

Now al is done : bring home the bride againe ;
 Bring home the triumph of our victory :
 Bring home with you the glory of her gaine,
 With joyance bring her and with jollity.
 Never had man more joyfull day then this,
 Whom heaven would heape with blis.
 Make feast therefore now all this live-long day ;
 This day for ever to me holy is.
 250 Poure out the wine without restraint or stay,
 Poure not by cups, but by the belly full,
 Poure out to all that wull,
 And sprinkle all the postes and wals with wine,
 That they may sweat, and drunken be withall.
 Crowne ye God Bacchus with a coronall,
 And Hymen also crowne with wreathes of vine ;
 And let the Graces daunce unto the rest,
 For they can doo it best :
 The whiles the maydens doe theyr carroll sing,
 260 To which the woods shall answer, and theyr eccho
 ring.

Ring ye the bells, ye yong men of the towne,
And leave your wonted labors for this day :
This day is holy ; doe ye write it downe,
That ye for ever it remember may.
This day the sunne is in his chiefest hight,
With Barnaby the bright,
From whence declining daily by degrees,
He somewhat loseth of his heat and light,
When once the Crab behind his back he sees.
But for this time it ill ordained was, 270
To chose the longest day in all the yeare,
And shortest night, when longest fitter weare :
Yet never day so long, but late would passe.
Ring ye the bells, to make it weare away,
And bonefiers make all day ;
And daunce about them, and about them sing,
That all the woods may answer, and your eccho ring.

Ah ! when will this long weary day have end,
And lende me leave to come unto my love ?
How slowly doe the houres theyr number spend ? 280
How slowly does sad Time his feathers move ?
Hast thee, O fayrest Planet, to thy home,
Within the Westernne fome :
The tyred steedes long since have need of rest.
Long though it be, at last I see it gloome,
And the bright evening-star with golden creast
Appeare out of the East.
Fayre childe of beauty ! glorious lampe of love !
That all the host of heaven in rankes doost lead,
And guydest lovers through the nights sad dread, 290
How chearefully thou lookest from above,
And seemst to laugh atweene thy twinkling light,
As joying in the sight
Of these glad many, which for joy doe sing,
That all the woods them answer, and their echo
ring !

Now cease, ye damsels, your delights fore-past;
 Enough it is that all the day was youres :
 Now day is doen, and night is nighing fast,
 Now bring the Bryde into the brydall boures.
 300 The night is come, now soon her disarray,
 And in her bed her lay ;
 Lay her in lillies and in violets,
 And silken courteins over her display,
 And odour'd sheetes, and Arras coverlets.
 Behold how goodly my faire love does ly,
 In proud humility !
 Like unto Maia, when as Jove her took
 In Tempe, lying on the flowry gras,
 Twixt sleepe and wake, after she weary was,
 310 With bathing in the Acidalian brooke.
 Now it is night, ye damsels may be gon,
 And leave my love alone,
 And leave likewise your former lay to sing :
 The woods no more shall answe're, nor your echo
 ring.

EDMUND SPENSER, 1594

GLOSSARY

beseene, comely.
croud, a fiddle.
descant, the upper voice in
 a part song.
diapred, variegated.
dight, dressed, adorned.
dreriment, sorrow.

fore-past, gone by.
lifull, full of life.
make, mate.
mote, might.
red, looked upon, beheld.
Tead, a torch.
uncruded, uncurdled.

From "Tamburlaine," Part I

Prologue

*From jigging veins of rhyming mother-wits,
And such conceits as clownage keeps in pay,
We'll lead you to the stately tent of war,
Where you shall hear the Scythian TAMBURLAINE
Threatening the world with high astounding terms
And scourging kingdoms with his conquering sword.
View but his picture in this tragic glass,
And then applaud his fortunes as you please.*

Tamburlaine's Ambition

Tam. With what a majesty he rears his looks :
In thee, thou valiant man of Persia, 10
I see the folly of thy emperor.
Art thou but captain of a thousand horse,
That by characters graven in thy brows,
And by thy martial face and stout aspect,
Deservest to have the leading of an host ?
Forsake thy king and do but join with me
And we will triumph over all the world.
I hold the Fates bound fast in iron chains,
And with my hand turn Fortune's wheel about,
And sooner shall the sun fall from his sphere, 20
Than Tamburlaine be slain or overcome.
Draw forth thy sword, thou mighty man-at-arms,
Intending but to raze my charmed skin,
And Jove himself will stretch his hand from heaven,
To ward the blow, and shield me safe from harm.
See how he rains down heaps of gold in showers
As if he meant to give my soldiers pay !
And, as a sure and grounded argument,
That I shall be the monarch of the East,
He sends this soldan's daughter rich and brave, 30
To be my queen and portly emperess.

If thou wilt stay with me, renowned man,
 And lead thy thousand horse with my conduct,
 Besides thy share of this Egyptian prize,
 Those thousand horse shall sweat with martial spoil
 Of conquered kingdoms and of cities sacked :
 Both we will walk upon the lofty cliffs ;
 And Christian merchants that with Russian stems
 Plough up huge furrows in the Caspian Sea,
 40 Shall vail to us, as lords of all the lake ;
 Both we will reign as consuls of the earth,
 And mighty kings shall be our senators.
 Jove sometime masked in a shepherd's weed ;
 And by those steps that he hath scaled the heavens,
 May we become immortal like the gods.
 Join with me now in this my mean estate,
 (I call it mean, because, being yet obscure,
 The nations far removed admire me not)
 And when my name and honour shall be spread,
 50 As far as Boreas claps his brazen wings,
 Or fair Bootes sends his cheerful light,
 Then shalt thou be competitor with me,
 And sit with Tamburlaine in all his majesty.

Act I, Scene II

High Astounding Terms

Tam. Now clear the triple region of the air,
 And let the Majesty of Heaven behold
 Their scourge and terror tread on emperors !
 Smile, stars that reigned at my nativity,
 And dim the brightness of their neighbour lamps,
 Disdain to borrow light of Cynthia !
 60 For I, the chiefest lamp of all the earth,
 First rising in the east with mild aspect,
 But fixed now in the meridian line,
 Will send up fire to your turning spheres,
 And cause the sun to borrow light of you !
 My sword struck fire from his coat of steel,

Even in Bithynia, when I took this Turk;
As when a fiery exhalation
Wrapt in the bowels of a freezing cloud,
Fighting for passage, makes the welkin crack,
And casts a flash of lightning to the earth : 70
But, ere I march to wealthy Persia,
Or leave Damascus and the Egyptian fields,
As was the fame of Clymene's brain-sick son
That almost brent the axle-tree of heaven,
So shall our swords, our lances and our shot
Fill all the air with fiery meteors !
Then, when the sky shall wax as red as blood,
It shall be said I made it red myself,
To make me think of naught but blood and war !

Act IV, Scene II

What is Beauty?

Tam. Ah, fair Zenocrate !—divine Zenocrate ! 80
Fair is too foul an epithet for thee !—
That in thy passion for thy country's love,
And fear to see thy kingly father's harm,
With hair dishevelled wipest thy watery cheeks ;
And, like to Flora in her morning's pride,
Shaking her silver tresses in the air,
Rainest on the earth resolved pearl in showers,
And sprinklest sapphires on thy shining face,
Where Beauty, mother to the Muses, sits,
And comments volumes with her ivory pen, 90
Taking instructions from thy flowing eyes,—
Eyes, when that Ebena steps to heaven,
In silence of thy solemn evening's walk,
Making the mantle of the richest night,
The moon, the planets, and the meteors, light.
There angels in their crystal armours fight
A doubtful battle with my tempted thoughts
For Egypt's freedom and the Soldan's life,
His life that so consumes Zenocrate,

100 Whose sorrows lay more siege unto my soul,
 Than all my army to Damascus' walls;
 And neither Persia's sovereign nor the Turk
 Troubled my senses with conceit of foil
 So much by much as doth Zenocrate.
 What is beauty, saith my sufferings, then?
 If all the pens that ever poets held
 Had fed the feeling of their masters' thoughts,
 And every sweetness that inspired their hearts,
 Their minds, and muses, on admired themes;
 110 If all the heavenly quintessence they still
 From their immortal flowers of poesy,
 Wherein, as in a mirror, we perceive
 The highest reaches of a human wit;
 If these had made one poem's period,
 And all combined in beauty's worthiness,
 Yet should there hover in their restless heads
 One thought, one grace, one wonder, at the least,
 Which into words no virtue can digest:
 But how unseemly is it for my sex,
 120 My discipline of arms and chivalry,
 My nature, and the terror of my name,
 To harbour thoughts effeminate and faint!
 Save only that in beauty's just applause,
 With whose instinct the soul of man is touched;
 And every warrior that is rapt with love
 Of fame, of valour, and of victory
 Must needs have beauty beat on his conceits;
 I thus conceiving and subduing both
 That which hath stooped the tempest of the Gods,
 130 Even from the fiery-spangled veil of heaven,
 To feel the lovely warmth of shepherds' flames,
 And mask in cottages of strowed reeds,
 Shall give the world to note, for all my birth,
 That virtue solely is the sum of glory,
 And fashions men with true nobility.

Act V, Scene II

CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE, 1587

From "Tamburlaine," Part II

Death of Zenocrate

Tam. Black is the beauty of the brightest day;
The golden ball of heaven's eternal fire,
That danced with glory on the silver waves,
Now wants the fuel that inflamed his beams;
And all with faintness, and for foul disgrace,
He binds his temples with a frowning cloud,
Ready to darken earth with endless night:
Zenocrate, that gave him light and life,
Whose eyes shot fire from their ivory brows,
And tempered every soul with lively heat,
Now by the malice of the angry skies,
Whose jealousy admits no second mate,
Draws in the comfort of her latest breath
All dazzled with the hellish mists of death.
Now walk the angels on the walls of heaven,
As sentinels to warn the immortal souls
To entertain divine Zenocrate!
Apollo, Cynthia, and the ceaseless lamps
That gently looked upon this loathsome earth,
Shine downwards now no more, but deck the heavens 20
To entertain divine Zenocrate!
The crystal springs, whose taste illuminates
Refined eyes with an eternal sight,
Like tried silver run through Paradise
To entertain divine Zenocrate!
The cherubins and holy seraphins,
That sing and play before the King of Kings,
Use all their voices and their instruments
To entertain divine Zenocrate!
And, in this sweet and curious harmony,
The god that tunes this music to our souls
Holds out his hand in highest majesty
To entertain divine Zenocrate!

10

30

Then let some holy trance convey my thoughts
Up to the palace of the empyreal heaven,
That this my life may be as short to me
As are the days of sweet Zenocrate!

Physicians, will no physic do her good?

Physician. My lord, your majesty shall soon perceive:

40 And if she pass this fit, the worst is past.

Tam. Tell me, how fares my fair Zenocrate?

Zen. I fare, my lord, as other empresses,
That, when this frail and transitory flesh
Hath sucked the measure of that vital air
That feeds the body with his dated health,
Wanes with enforced and necessary change.

Tam. May never such a change transform my love,
In whose sweet being I repose my life!
Whose heavenly presence, beautified with health,
50 Gives light to Phœbus and the fixed stars,
Whose absence makes the sun and moon as dark
As when, opposed in one diameter,
Their spheres are mounted on the serpent's head,
Or else descended to his winding train.
Live still, my love, and so conserve my life;
Or, dying, be the author of my death.

Zen. Live still, my lord; O, let my sovereign live!
And sooner let the fiery element
Dissolve, and make your kingdom in the sky,
60 Than this base earth should shroud your majesty;
For, should I but suspect your death by mine,
The comfort of my future happiness,
And hope to meet your highness in the heavens,
Turned to despair, would break my wretched breast,
And fury would confound my present rest.
But let me die, my love; yet let me die;
With love and patience let your true love die;
Your grief and fury hurts my second life.
Yet let me kiss my lord before I die,

And let me die with kissing of my lord.
But, since my life is lengthened yet a while,
Let me take leave of these my loving sons,
And of my lords, whose true nobility
Have merited my latest memory.

Sweet sons, farewell! In death resemble me,
And in your lives your father's excellency.
Some music, and my fit will cease, my lord.

[They call for music.]

Tam. Proud fury, and intolerable fit,
That dares torment the body of my love,
And scourge the scourge of the immortal God!
Now are those spheres, where Cupid used to sit,
Wounding the world with wonder and with love,
Sadly supplied with pale and ghastly death,
Whose darts do pierce the centre of my soul.
Her sacred beauty hath enchanted heaven;
And, had she lived before the siege of Troy,
Helen, whose beauty summoned Greece to arms,
And drew a thousand ships to Tenedos,
Had not been named in Homer's Iliads—
Her name had been in every line he wrote :
Or, had those wanton poets, for whose birth
Old Rome was proud, but gazed a while on her,
Nor Lesbia nor Corinna had been named—
Zenocrate had been the argument
Of every epigram or elegy!

[The music sounds, and she dies.]

What, is she dead? Techelles, draw thy sword,
And wound the earth, that it may cleave in twain,
And we descend into the infernal vaults,
To hale the Fatal Sisters by the hair,
And throw them in the triple moat of hell,
For taking hence my fair Zenocrate!
Casane and Theridamas, to arms!
Raise cavalieros higher than the clouds,
And with the cannon break the frame of heaven!

Batter the shining palace of the sun,
And shiver all the starry firmament,
For amorous Jove hath snatched my love from hence,
Meaning to make her stately queen of heaven!
What god soever holds thee in his arms,
110 Giving thee nectar and ambrosia,
Behold me here, divine Zenocrate,
Raving, impatient, desperate, and mad,
Breaking my steeled lance, with which I burst
The rusty beams of Janus' temple doors,
Letting out Death and tyrannizing War,
To march with me under this bloody flag!
And, if thou pitiest Tamburlaine the Great,
Come down from heaven, and live with me again!

Act II, Scene IV

CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE, 1587

Four Sonnets

No. XXIX

WHEN, in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes,
I all alone bewEEP my outcast state
And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries,
And look upon myself and curse my fate,
Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,
Featured like him, like him with friends possess'd,
Desiring this man's art and that man's scope,
With what I most enjoy contented least;
Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising,
10 Haply I think on thee, and then my state,
Like to the lark at break of day arising
From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate;
For thy sweet love remember'd such wealth brings
That then I scorn to change my state with kings.

No. XXX

When to the sessions of sweet silent thought
I summon up remembrance of things past,
I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought,
And with old woes new wail my dear time's waste :
Then can I drown an eye, unused to flow,
For precious friends hid in death's dateless night, 20
And weep afresh love's long since cancell'd woe,
And moan the expense of many a vanish'd sight :
Then can I grieve at grievances foregone,
And heavily from woe to woe tell o'er
The sad account of fore-bemoaned moan,
Which I new pay as if not paid before.

But if the while I think on thee, dear friend,
All losses are restored and sorrows end.

No. CIV

To me, fair friend, you never can be old,
For as you were when first your eye I eyed, 30
Such seems your beauty still. Three winters cold
Have from the forests shook three summers' pride,
Three beauteous springs to yellow autumn turn'd
In process of the seasons have I seen,
Three April perfumes in three hot Junes burn'd,
Since first I saw you fresh, which yet are green.
Ah ! yet doth beauty, like a dial hand,
Steal from his figure and no pace perceived ;
So your sweet hue, which methinks still doth stand,
Hath motion and mine eye may be deceived : 40
For fear of which, hear this, thou age unbred ;
Ere you were born was beauty's summer dead.

No. CXVI

Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove :
O, no ! it is an ever-fixed mark
That looks on tempests and is never shaken ;
It is the star to every wandering bark,
50 Whose worth's unknown, although his height be
taken.
Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come ;
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.
If this be error and upon me proved,
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE, *about 1594*

Twelve Songs

Winter

WHEN icicles hang by the wall
And Dick the shepherd blows his nail
And Tom bears logs into the hall
And milk comes frozen home in pail,
When blood is nipp'd and ways be foul,
Then nightly sings the staring owl,
Tu-whit ;
Tu-who, a merry note,
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.
10 When all aloud the wind doth blow
And coughing drowns the parson's saw
And birds sit brooding in the snow
And Marian's nose looks red and raw,

When roasted crabs hiss in the bowl,
Then nightly sings the staring owl,
Tu-whit ;

Tu-who, a merry note,
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

Love's Labour's Lost, about 1591

Fairy Lullaby

You spotted snakes with double tongue,
Thorny hedgehogs, be not seen ;
Newts and blind-worms, do no wrong,
Come not near our fairy queen.

20

Philomel, with melody
Sing in our sweet lullaby ;
Lulla, lulla, lullaby, lulla, lulla, lullaby :
Never harm,
Nor spell nor charm,
Come our lovely lady nigh ;
So, good night, with lullaby.

Weaving spiders, come not here ;
Hence, you long-legg'd spinners, hence !
Beetles black, approach not near ;
Worm nor snail, do no offence.

30

Philomel, with melody
Sing in our sweet lullaby ;
Lulla, lulla, lullaby, lulla, lulla, lullaby !
Never harm,
Nor spell nor charm,
Come our lovely lady nigh ;
So, good night, with lullaby.

40

A Midsummer Night's Dream, 1595

The Greenwood

Under the greenwood tree
Who loves to lie with me,
And turn his merry note
Unto the sweet bird's throat,
Come hither, come hither, come hither:
Here shall he see
No enemy
But winter and rough weather.

50 Who doth ambition shun
And loves to live i' the sun,
Seeking the food he eats
And pleased with what he gets,
Come hither, come hither, come hither:
Here shall he see
No enemy
But winter and rough weather.

As You Like It, 1599

Ingratitude

60 Blow, blow, thou winter wind,
Thou art not so unkind
As man's ingratitude;
Thy tooth is not so keen,
Because thou art not seen,
Although thy breath be rude.
Heigh ho! sing, heigh ho! unto the green holly:
Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly:
Then, heigh ho, the holly!
This life is most jolly.

70 Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky,
Thou dost not bite so nigh
As benefits forgot:
Though thou the waters warp,

Thy sting is not so sharp
As friend remember'd not.
Heigh ho! sing, heigh ho! unto the green holly:
Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly:
Then, heigh ho, the holly!
This life is most jolly.

As You Like It, 1599

Sweet and Twenty

O mistress mine, where are you roaming?
O, stay and hear, your true love's coming,
That can sing both high and low:
Trip no further, pretty sweetening;
Journeys end in lovers meeting,
Every wise man's son doth know.

80

What is love? tis not hereafter;
Present mirth hath present laughter;
What's to come is still unsure:
In delay there lies no plenty;
Then come kiss me, sweet and twenty,
Youth's a stuff will not endure.

Twelfth Night, 1599

A Dirge

Come away, come away, death,
And in sad cypress let me be laid;
Fly away, fly away, breath;
I am slain by a fair cruel maid.
My shroud of white, stuck all with yew,
O, prepare it!
My part of death, no one so true
Did share it.

90

Not a flower, not a flower sweet,
 On my black coffin let there be strown;
 Not a friend, not a friend greet
 My poor corpse, where my bones shall
 be thrown:
 A thousand thousand sighs to save,
 Lay me, O, where
 Sad true lover never find my grave,
 To weep there!

Twelfth Night, 1599

Take, O, take those Lips away
 Take, O, take those lips away,
 That so sweetly were forsworn;
 And those eyes, the break of day,
 Lights that do mislead the morn:
 But my kisses bring again, bring again;
 Seals of love, but seal'd in vain, seal'd in vain.

Measure for Measure, 1604

A Morning Song

Hark, hark! the lark at heaven's gate sings,
 And Phœbus 'gins arise,
 His steeds to water at those springs
 On chaliced flowers that lies;
 And winking Mary-buds begin
 To ope their golden eyes:
 With every pretty thing that is,
 My lady sweet, arise:
 Arise, arise.

Cymbeline, 1610

Fidele

Fear no more the heat o' the sun,
Nor the furious winter's rages;
Thou thy worldly task hast done,
Home art gone, and ta'en thy wages:
Golden lads and girls all must,
As chimney-sweepers, come to dust.

120

Fear no more the frown o' the great;
Thou art past the tyrant's stroke;
Care no more to clothe and eat;
To thee the reed is as the oak:
The sceptre, learning, physic, must
All follow this, and come to dust.

130

Fear no more the lightning-flash,
Nor the all-dreaded thunder-stone;
Fear not slander, censure rash;
Thou hast finish'd joy and moan:
All lovers young, all lovers must
Consign to thee, and come to dust.

No exorciser harm thee!
Nor no witchcraft charm thee!
Ghost unlaid forbear thee!
Nothing ill come near thee!
Quiet consummation have;
And renowned be thy grave!

140

Cymbeline, 1610

A Fairy Dance

150 Come unto these yellow sands,
And then take hands :
Courtsied when you have and kiss'd
The wild waves whist,
Foot it featly here and there ;
And, sweet sprites, the burthen bear,
Hark, hark !
Bow-wow.

The watch-dogs bark :
Bow-wow.

Hark, hark ! I hear
The strain of strutting chanticleer
Cry, Cock-a-diddle-dow.

The Tempest, 1611

Sea-change

160 Full fathom five thy father lies ;
Of his bones are coral made ;
Those are pearls that were his eyes :
Nothing of him that doth fade
But doth suffer a sea-change
Into something rich and strange.
Sea-nymphs hourly ring his knell :
Hark ! now I hear them—Ding-dong, bell.

The Tempest, 1611

Fairy Liberty

170 Where the bee sucks, there suck I :
In a cowslip's bell I lie ;
There I couch when owls do cry.
On the bat's back I do fly
After summer merrily.
Merrily, merrily shall I live now
Under the blossom that hangs on the bough.

The Tempest, 1611

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

A Fairy Quarrel

*Enter, from one side, OBERON, with his train ;
from the other, TITANIA, with hers.*

Oberon. Ill met by moonlight, proud Titania.

Titania. What, jealous Oberon ! Fairies, skip
hence :

I have forsworn his bed and company.

Oberon. Tarry, rash wanton : am not I thy lord ?

Titania. Then I must be thy lady : but I know
When thou hast stolen away from fairy land,
And in the shape of Corin sat all day,
Playing on pipes of corn and versing love
To amorous Phillida. Why art thou here,
Come from the farthest steppe of India ?
But that, forsooth, the bouncing Amazon,
Your buskin'd mistress and your warrior love,
To Theseus must be wedded, and you come
To give their bed joy and prosperity.

10

Oberon. How canst thou thus for shame, Titania,
Glance at my credit with Hippolyta,
Knowing I know thy love to Theseus ?
Didst thou not lead him through the glimmering
night
From Perigenia ?

And make him with fair Ægle break his faith,
With Ariadne and Antiopa ?

20

Titania. These are the forgeries of jealousy :
And never, since the middle summer's spring,
Met we on hill, in dale, forest or mead,
By paved fountain or by rushy brook,
Or in the beached margent of the sea,
To dance our ringlets to the whistling wind,
But with thy brawls thou hast disturb'd our sport.
Therefore the winds, piping to us in vain,
As in revenge, have suck'd up from the sea

30

Contagious fogs ; which falling in the land
Have every pelting river made so proud
That they have overborne their continents :
The ox hath therefore stretch'd his yoke in vain,
The ploughman lost his sweat, and the green corn
Hath rotted ere his youth attain'd a beard ;
The fold stands empty in the drowned field,
And crows are fatted with the murrion flock ;
The nine men's morris is fill'd up with mud,
40 And the quaint mazes in the wanton green
For lack of tread are undistinguishable :
The human mortals want their winter here ;
No night is now with hymn or carol blest :
Therefore the moon, the governess of floods,
Pale in her anger, washes all the air,
That rheumatic diseases do abound :
And thorough this distemperature we see
The seasons alter : hoary-headed frosts
Fall in the fresh lap of the crimson rose,
50 And on old Hiems' thin and icy crown
An odorous chaplet of sweet summer buds
Is, as in mockery, set : the spring, the summer,
The chiding autumn, angry winter, change
Their wonted liveries, and the mazed world,
By their increase, now knows not which is which :
And this same progeny of evils comes
From our debate, from our dissension ;
We are their parents and original.

Oberon. Do you amend it then ; it lies in you :
60 Why should Titania cross her Oberon ?
I do but beg a little changeling boy,
To be my henchman.

Titania. Set your heart at rest :
The fairy land buys not the child of me.
His mother was a votaress of my order :
And, in the spiced Indian air, by night
Full often hath she gossip'd by my side,

And sat with me on Neptune's yellow sands,
Marking the embarked traders on the flood,
When we have laugh'd to see the sails,
Which she, with pretty and with swimming gait
Would imitate, and sail upon the land,
To fetch me trifles, and return again,
As from a voyage, rich with merchandise.
But she, being mortal, of that boy did die;
And for her sake do I rear up her boy,
And for her sake I will not part with him.

70

Oberon. How long within this wood intend you
stay?

Titania. Perchance till after Theseus' wedding-day.
If you will patiently dance in our round
And see our moonlight revels, go with us;
If not, shun me, and I will spare your haunts.

80

Oberon. Give me that boy, and I will go with thee.

Titania. Not for thy fairy kingdom. Fairies, away!
We shall chide downright, if I longer stay.

[Exit Titania with her train.]

Oberon. Well, go thy way : thou shalt not from this
grove

Till I torment thee for this injury.
My gentle Puck, come hither. Thou rememberest
Since once I sat upon a promontory,
And heard a mermaid on a dolphin's back
Uttering such dulcet and harmonious breath
That the rude sea grew civil at her song
And certain stars shot madly from their spheres,
To hear the sea-maid's music.

90

Puck. I remember.

Oberon. That very time I saw, but thou couldst
not,

Flying between the cold moon and the earth,
Cupid all arm'd : a certain aim he took
At a fair vestal throned by the west,
And loosed his love-shaft smartly from his bow,

As it should pierce a hundred thousand hearts;
100 But I might see young Cupid's fiery shaft
Quench'd in the chaste beams of the watery moon,
And the imperial votaress passed on,
In maiden meditation, fancy-free.
Yet mark'd I where the bolt of Cupid fell :
It fell upon a little western flower,
Before milk-white, now purple with love's wound,
And maidens call it love-in-idleness.
Fetch me that flower; the herb I shew'd thee once :
The juice of it on sleeping eye-lids laid
110 Will make or man or woman madly dote
Upon the next live creature that it sees.
Fetch me this herb; and be thou here again
Ere the leviathan can swim a league.

Puck. I'll put a girdle round about the earth
In forty minutes.

Oberon. Having once this juice,
I'll watch Titania when she is asleep,
And drop the liquor of it in her eyes.
The next thing then she waking looks upon,
Be it on lion, bear, or wolf, or bull,
120 On meddling monkey, or on busy ape,
She shall pursue it with the soul of love :
And ere I take this charm from off her sight,
As I can take it with another herb,
I'll make her render up her page to me.

A Midsummer Night's Dream,
Act II, Scene I, 1595

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

A Remonstrance

Ulysses and Achilles

Ulysses. Time hath, my lord, a wallet at his back,
Wherein he puts alms for oblivion,
A great-sized monster of ingratitude :
Those scraps are good deeds past ; which are devour'd
As fast as they are made, forgot as soon
As done : perseverance, dear my lord,
Keeps honour bright : to have done is to hang
Quite out of fashion, like a rusty mail
In monumental mockery. Take the instant way ;
For honour travels in a strait so narrow, 10
Where one but goes abreast : keep then the path ;
For emulation hath a thousand sons
That one by one pursue : if you give way,
Or hedge aside from the direct forthright,
Like to an enter'd tide they all rush by
And leave you hindmost ;
Or, like a gallant horse fall'n in first rank,
Lie there for pavement to the abject rear,
O'er-run and trampled on : then what they do in
present,
Though less than yours in past, must o'er-top yours ; 20
For time is like a fashionable host,
That slightly shakes his parting guest by the hand,
And with his arms outstretch'd, as he would fly,
Grasps in the comer : welcome ever smiles,
And farewell goes out sighing. O, let not virtue seek
Remuneration for the thing it was ;
For beauty, wit,
High birth, vigour of bone, desert in service,
Love, friendship, charity, are subjects all
To envious and calumniating time. 30
One touch of nature makes the whole world kin,
That all with one consent praise new-born gawds,

Though they are made and moulded of things past,
And give to dust that is a little guilt
More laud than guilt o'er-dusted.

The present eye praises the present object :
Then marvel not, thou great and complete man,
That all the Greeks begin to worship Ajax ;
Since things in motion sooner catch the eye
40 Than what not stirs. The cry went once on thee,
And still it might, and yet it may again,
If thou wouldst not entomb thyself alive
And case thy reputation in thy tent ;
Whose glorious deeds, but in these fields of late,
Made emulous missions 'mongst the gods themselves,
And drave great Mars to faction.

Achilles. Of this my privacy
I have strong reasons.

Ulysses. But 'gainst your privacy
The reasons are more potent and heroical :
'Tis known, Achilles, that you are in love
50 With one of Priam's daughters.

Achilles. Ha ! known !

Ulysses. Is that a wonder ?
The providence that's in a watchful state
Knows almost every grain of Plutus' gold,
Finds bottom in the uncomprehensive deeps,
Keeps place with thought and almost, like the gods,
Does thoughts unveil in their dumb cradles.
There is a mystery—with whom relation
Durst never meddle—in the soul of state ;
Which hath an operation more divine
60 Than breath or pen can give expressure to :
All the commerce that you have had with Troy
As perfectly is ours as yours, my lord ;
And better would it fit Achilles much
To throw down Hector than Polyxena :
But it must grieve young Pyrrhus now at home,
When fame shall in our island sound her trump ;

And all the Greekish girls shall tripping sing,
"Great Hector's sister did Achilles win;
But our brave Ajax bravely beat down him."
Farewell, my lord : I as your lover speak ;
The fool slides o'er the ice that you should break.

70

Troilus and Cressida, Act III, Scene III, 1603

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Three Farewells

Romeo and Juliet

Scene : A balcony to Juliet's chamber.

Juliet. Wilt thou be gone ? it is not yet near day :
It was the nightingale, and not the lark,
That pierced the fearful hollow of thine ear ;
Nightly she sings on yond pomegranate-tree :
Believe me, love, it was the nightingale.

Romeo. It was the lark, the herald of the morn,
No nightingale : look, love, what envious streaks
Do lace the severing clouds in yonder east :
Night's candles are burnt out, and jocund day
Stands tiptoe on the misty mountain-tops.
I must be gone and live, or stay and die.

10

Juliet. Yond light is not day-light, I know it, I :
It is some meteor that the sun exhales,
To be to thee this night a torch-bearer,
And light thee on thy way to Mantua :
Therefore stay yet ; thou need'st not to be gone.

Romeo. Let me be ta'en, let me be put to death ;
I am content, so thou wilt have it so.
I'll say yon grey is not the morning's eye,
'Tis but the pale reflex of Cynthia's brow ;
Nor that is not the lark whose notes do beat
The vaulty heaven so high above our heads :

20

I have more care to stay than will to go :
Come, death, and welcome ! Juliet wills it so.
How is't, my soul ? let's talk ; it is not day.

Juliet. It is, it is : hie hence, be gone, away !
It is the lark that sings so out of tune,
Straining harsh discords and unpleasing sharps.
Some say the lark makes sweet division :
30 This does not so, for she divideth us ;
Some say the lark and loathed toad change eyes ;
O, now I would they had changed voices too !
Since arm from arm that voice doth us affray,
Hunting thee hence with hunt's-up to the day.
O, now be gone ; more light and light it grows.

Romeo. More light and light ; more dark and dark
our woes ! *[Enter Nurse.]*

Nurse. Madam !

Juliet. Nurse ?

Nurse. Your lady mother is coming to your chamber :

40 The day is broke ; be wary ; look about. *[Exit.]*

Juliet. Then, window, let day in, and let life out.

Romeo. Farewell, farewell ! one kiss, and I'll descend. *[Descends.]*

Juliet. Art thou gone so ? love, lord, ay, husband,
friend !

I must hear from thee every day in the hour,
For in a minute there are many days :

O, by this count I shall be much in years
Ere I again behold my Romeo !

Romeo. Farewell !

I will omit no opportunity

50 That may convey my greetings, love, to thee.

Juliet. O, think'st thou we shall ever meet again ?

Romeo. I doubt it not ; and all these woes shall
serve

For sweet discourses in our time to come.

Juliet. O God ! I have an ill-divining soul !

Methinks I see thee, now thou art below,
As one dead in the bottom of a tomb :
Either my eyesight fails or thou look'st pale.

Romeo. And trust me, love, in my eye so do you :
Dry sorrow drinks our blood. Adieu ! adieu !

[*Exit.*

Juliet. O fortune, fortune ! all men call thee fickle : 60
If thou are fickle, what dost thou with him
That is renown'd for faith ? Be fickle, fortune ;
For then, I hope, thou wilt not keep him long,
But send him back.

Romeo and Juliet, Act III, Scene V, 1592

Othello

Othello. Be not afraid, though you do see me
 weapon'd ;

Here is my journey's end, here is my butt,
And very sea-mark of my utmost sail.

Do you go back dismay'd ? 'tis a lost fear ;

Man but a rush against Othello's breast,

And he retires. Where should Othello go ?

70

Now, how dost thou look now ? O ill-starr'd wench !

Pale as thy smock ! when we shall meet at compt,

This look of thine will hurl my soul from heaven,

And friends will snatch at it. Cold, cold, my girl !

Even like thy chastity. O cursed slave !

Whip me, ye devils,

From the possession of this heavenly sight !

Blow me about in winds ! roast me in sulphur !

Wash me in steep-down gulfs of liquid fire !

O Desdemona ! Desdemona ! dead !

80

Oh ! Oh ! Oh !

• • • • •

Othello. I have done the state some service, and
 they know't.

No more of that. I pray you, in your letters,
When you shall these unlucky deeds relate,
Speak of me as I am; nothing extenuate,
Nor set down aught in malice: then must you speak
Of one that loved not wisely but too well;
Of one not easily jealous, but being wrought
Perplex'd in the extreme; of one whose hand,
90 Like the base Indian, threw a pearl away
Richer than all his tribe; of one whose subdued
eyes,

Albeit unused to the melting mood,
Drop tears as fast as the Arabian trees
Their medicinal gum. Set you down this;
And say besides, that in Aleppo once,
When a malignant and a turban'd Turk
Beat a Venetian and traduced the state,
I took by the throat the circumcised dog,
And smote him, thus! [Stabs himself.

Lodovico. O bloody period!

100 *Gratiano.* All that's spoke is marr'd.

Othello. I kiss'd thee ere I kill'd thee: no way but
this;

Killing myself, to die upon a kiss.

[Falls across Desdemona's body and dies.

Othello, Act V, Scene II, 1604

Prospero

Our revels now are ended. These our actors,
As I foretold you, were all spirits and
Are melted into air, into thin air:
And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,
The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve
110 And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff

As dreams are made on, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep.

The Tempest, Act IV, Scene I

Ye elves of hills, brooks, standing lakes and groves,
And ye that on the sands with printless foot
Do chase the ebbing Neptune and do fly him
When he comes back; you demi-puppets that
By moonshine do the green sour ringlets make,
Whereof the ewe not bites, and you whose pastime
Is to make midnight mushrooms, that rejoice 120
To hear the solemn curfew; by whose aid,
Weak masters though ye be, I have bedimm'd
The noontide sun, call'd forth the mutinous winds,
And 'twixt the green sea and the azured vault
Set roaring war: to the dread rattling thunder
Have I given fire and rifted Jove's stout oak
With his own bolt; the strong-based promontory
Have I made shake; and by the spurs pluck'd up
The pine and cedar: graves at my command
Have waked their sleepers, oped, and let 'em forth 130
By my so potent art. But this rough magic
I here abjure; and, when I have required
Some heavenly music, which even now I do,
To work mine end upon their senses that
This airy charm is for, I'll break my staff,
Bury it certain fathoms in the earth,
And deeper than did ever plummet sound
I'll drown my book.

The Tempest, Act V, Scene I, 1611

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

L'Allegro

HASTE thee, Nymph, and bring with thee
Jest, and youthful Jollity,
Quips, and Cranks, and wanton Wiles,
Nods and Becks and wreathed Smiles,
Such as hang on Hebe's cheek,
And love to live in dimple sleek;
Sport that wrinkled Care derides,
And Laughter holding both his sides.
Come, and trip it, as you go,
10 On the light fantastic toe;
And in thy right hand lead with thee
The mountain-nymph, sweet Liberty;
And if I give thee honour due,
Mirth, admit me of thy crew,
To live with her, and live with thee
In unreprieved pleasures free;
To hear the lark begin his flight,
And, singing, startle the dull night,
From his watch-tower in the skies,
20 Till the dappled dawn doth rise;
Then to come in spite of sorrow,
And at my window bid good-morrow,
Through the sweet-briar or the vine,
Or the twisted eglantine;
While the cock, with lively din,
Scatters the rear of darkness thin;
And to the stack, or the barn-door,
Stoutly struts his dames before:
Oft listening how the hounds and horn
30 Cheerly rouse the slumbering morn,
From the side of some hoar hill,
Through the high wood echoing shrill:
Sometime walking, not unseen,
By hedgerow elms, on hillocks green,
Right against the eastern gate

Where the great Sun begins his state,
 Robed in flames and amber light,
 The clouds in thousand liveries dight;
 While the ploughman, near at hand,
 Whistles o'er the furrow'd land,
 And the milkmaid singeth blithe,
 And the mower whets his scythe,
 And every shepherd tells his tale
 Under the hawthorn in the dale.
 Straight mine eye hath caught new pleasures,
 Whilst the landskip round it measures :
 Russet lawns, and fallows grey,
 Where the nibbling flocks do stray ;
 Mountains on whose barren breast
 The labouring clouds do often rest ;
 Meadows trim, with daisies pied ;
 Shallow brooks, and rivers wide ;
 Towers and battlements it sees
 Bosomed high in tufted trees,
 Where perhaps some Beauty lies,
 The cynosure of neighbouring eyes.
 Hard by a cottage chimney smokes
 From betwixt two aged oaks,
 Where Corydon and Thyrsis met,
 Are at their savoury dinner set
 Of herbs and other country messes,
 Which the neat-handed Phillis dresses ;
 And then in haste her bower she leaves,
 With Thestylis to bind the sheaves ;
 Or, if the earlier season lead,
 To the tanned haycock in the mead.
 Sometimes, with secure delight,
 The upland hamlets will invite,
 When the merry bells ring round,
 And jocund rebecks sound
 To many a youth and many a maid
 Dancing in the chequered shade,

40

50

60

70

And young and old come forth to play
On a sunshine holyday,
Till the livelong daylight fail :
Then to the spicy nut-brown ale,
With stories told of many a feat,
How Faery Mab the junkets eat.
She was pinched and pulled, she said ;
80 And he, by Friar's lantern led,
Tells how the drudging goblin sweat
To earn his cream-bowl duly set,
When in one night, ere glimpse of morn,
His shadowy flail hath threshed the corn
That ten day-labourers could not end :
Then lies him down, the lubber fiend,
And, stretch'd out all the chimney's length,
Basks at the fire his hairy strength,
And crop-full out of doors he flings,
90 Ere the first cock his matin rings.
Thus done the tales, to bed they creep,
By whispering winds soon lulled asleep.
Towered cities please us then,
And the busy hum of men,
Where throngs of knights and barons bold,
In weeds of peace, high triumphs hold,
With store of ladies, whose bright eyes
Rain influence, and judge the prize
Of wit or arms, while both contend
100 To win her grace whom all commend.
There let Hymen oft appear
In saffron robe, with taper clear,
And pomp, and feast, and revelry,
With mask, and antique pageantry ;
Such sights as youthful poets dream
On summer eves by haunted stream.
Then to the well-trod stage anon,
If Jonson's learned sock be on,
Or sweetest Shakespeare, Fancy's child,

Warble his native wood-notes wild.
 And ever, against eating cares,
 Lap me in soft Lydian airs,
 Married to immortal verse,
 Such as the meeting soul may pierce,
 In notes with many a winding bout
 Of linked sweetness long drawn out
 With wanton heed and giddy cunning,
 The melting voice through mazes running,
 Untwisting all the chains that tie
 The hidden soul of harmony;
 That Orpheus' self may heave his head
 From golden slumber on a bed
 Of heaped Elysian flowers, and hear
 Such strains as would have won the ear
 Of Pluto to have quite set free
 His half-regain'd Eurydice.
 These delights if thou canst give,
 Mirth, with thee I mean to live.

110

120

JOHN MILTON, 1633

Lycidas

YET once more, O ye laurels, and once more,
 Ye myrtles brown, with ivy never sere,
 I come to pluck your berries harsh and crude,
 And with forced fingers rude
 Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year.
 Bitter constraint and sad occasion dear
 Compels me to disturb your season due;
 For Lycidas is dead, dead ere his prime,
 Young Lycidas, and hath not left his peer.
 Who would not sing for Lycidas? he knew
 Himself to sing, and build the lofty rhyme.
 He must not float upon his watery bier
 Unwept, and welter to the parching wind,

10

Without the meed of some melodious tear.

Begin, then, Sisters of the sacred well
That from beneath the seat of Jove doth spring;
Begin, and somewhat loudly sweep the string.
Hence with denial vain and coy excuse :

So may some gentle Muse
20 With lucky words favour my destin'd urn,
And as he passes turn,
And bid fair peace be to my sable shroud.

For we were nursed upon the self-same hill,
Fed the same flock, by fountain, shade, and rill;
Together both, ere the high lawns appeared
Under the opening eyelids of the Morn,
We drove a-field, and both together heard
What time the grey-fly winds her sultry horn,
Battening our flocks with the fresh dewes of night,
30 Oft till the star that rose at evening bright
Toward heaven's descent had sloped his westering
wheel.

Meanwhile the rural ditties were not mute;
Tempered to the oaten flute
Rough Satyrs danced, and Fauns with cloven heel
From the glad sound would not be absent long;
And old Damœtas loved to hear our song.

But, oh! the heavy change, now thou art gone,
Now thou art gone and never must return!
Thee, Shepherd, thee the woods and desert caves
40 With wild thyme and the gadding vine o'ergrown,
And all their echoes, mourn:
The willows, and the hazel copses green,
Shall now no more be seen
Fanning their joyous leaves to thy soft lays.
As killing as the canker to the rose,
Or taint-worm to the weanling herds that graze
Or frost to flowers, that their gay wardrobe wear,
When first the white-thorn blows;
—Such, Lycidas, thy loss to shepherd's ear.

Where were ye, Nymphs, when the remorseless
deep

50

Closed o'er the head of your loved Lycidas?
For neither were ye playing on the steep
Where your old bards, the famous Druids, lie,
Nor on the shaggy top of Mona high,
Nor yet where Deva spreads her wizard stream.
Ay me! I fondly dream

"Had ye been there," for what could that have
done?

What could the Muse herself that Orpheus bore,
The Muse herself, for her enchanting son
Whom universal nature did lament,
When, by the rout that made the hideous roar,
His gory visage down the stream was sent,
Down the swift Hebrus to the Lesbian shore?

60

Alas! what boots it with uncessant care
To tend the homely, slighted, shepherd's trade,
And strictly meditate the thankless Muse?

Were it not better done, as others use,
To sport with Amaryllis in the shade,
Or with the tangles of Neæra's hair?

Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise
(That last infirmity of noble mind)

70

To scorn delights and live laborious days;
But the fair guerdon when we hope to find,
And think to burst out into sudden blaze,
Comes the blind Fury with th' abhorred shears,
And slits the thin-spun life. "But not the praise,"
Phœbus replied, and touched my trembling ears:

"Fame is no plant that grows on mortal soil,
Nor in the glistening foil

Set off to the world, nor in broad rumour lies,
But lives and spreads aloft by those pure eyes
And perfect witness of all-judging Jove;

80

As he pronounces lastly on each deed,
Of so much fame in heaven expect thy meed."

O fountain Arethuse, and thou honoured flood,
 Smooth-sliding Mincius, crowned with vocal reeds,
 That strain I heard was of a higher mood.
 But now my oat proceeds,
 And listens to the Herald of the Sea,
 90 That came in Neptune's plea.
 He ask'd the waves, and asked the felon winds,
 What hard mishap hath doomed this gentle swain?
 And question'd every gust of rugged wings
 That blows from off each beaked promontory.
 They knew not of his story;
 And sage Hippotades their answer brings,
 That not a blast was from his dungeon strayed:
 The air was clam, and on the level brine
 Sleek Panope with all her sisters played.
 100 It was that fatal and perfidious bark,
 Built in the eclipse, and rigged with curses dark,
 That sunk so low that sacred head of thine.
 Next, Camus, reverend sire, went footing slow,
 His mantle hairy, and his bonnet sedge,
 Inwrought with figures dim, and on the edge
 Like to that sanguine flower inscribed with woe.
 "Ah! who hath reft," quoth he, "my dearest pledge?"
 Last came, and last did go,
 The Pilot of the Galilean Lake;
 110 Two massy keys he bore of metals twain
 (The golden opes, the iron shuts amain).
 He shook his mitred locks, and stern bespake:—
 "How well could I have spared for thee, young swain,
 Enow of such as, for their bellies' sake,
 Creep and intrude, and climb into the fold!
 Of other care they little reckoning make
 Than how to scramble at the shearers' feast,
 And shove away the worthy bidden guest.
 Blind mouths! that scarce themselves know how to
 hold
 120 A sheep-hook, or have learn'd aught else the least

That to the faithful herdman's art belongs !
What reck's it then ? What need they ? They are sped ;
And, when they list, their lean and flashy songs
Grate on their scrannel pipes of wretched straw ;
The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed,
But, swoln with wind and the rank mist they draw,
Rot inwardly, and foul contagion spread :
Besides what the grim wolf with privy paw
Daily devours apace, and nothing said.
But that two-handed engine at the door
Stands ready to smite once, and smite no more."

130

Return, Alpheus ; the dread voice is past
That shrunk thy streams ; return, Sicilian Muse,
And call the vales, and bid them hither cast
Their bells and flowerets of a thousand hues.
Ye valleys low, where the mild whispers use
Of shades, and wanton winds, and gushing brooks,
On whose fresh lap the swart star sparely looks,
Throw hither all your quaint enamelled eyes,
That on the green turf suck the honeyed showers,
And purple all the ground with vernal flowers.
Bring the rathe primrose that forsaken dies,
The tufted crow-toe, and pale jessamine,
The white pink, and the pansy freaked with jet,
The glowing violet,
The musk-rose, and the well-attired woodbine,
With cowslips wan that hang the pensive head,
And every flower that sad embroidery wears ;
Bid Amaranthus all his beauty shed,
And daffadillies fill their cups with tears,
To strew the laureate hearse where Lycid lies.
For so, to interpose a little ease,
Let our frail thoughts dally with false surmise.
Ay me ! whilst thee the shores and sounding seas
Wash far away, where'er thy bones are hurled ;
Whether beyond the stormy Hebrides,
Where thou perhaps under the whelming tide

140

150

Visit'st the bottom of the monstrous world ;
Or whether thou, to our moist vows denied,
160 Sleep'st by the fable of Bellerus old,
Where the great Vision of the guarded mount
Looks toward Namancos and Bayona's hold.
—Look homeward, Angel, now, and melt with ruth :
And, O ye dolphins, waft the hapless youth.

Weep no more, woeful shepherds, weep no more,
For Lycidas, your sorrow, is not dead,
Sunk though he be beneath the watery floor.
So sinks the day-star in the ocean-bed,
And yet anon repairs his drooping head,
170 And tricks his beams, and with new-spangled ore
Flames in the forehead of the morning sky :
So Lycidas sunk low, but mounted high,
Through the dear might of Him that walked the waves,
Where, other groves and other streams along,
With nectar pure his oozy locks he laves,
And hears the unexpressive nuptial song,
In the blest kingdoms meek of joy and love.
There entertain him all the Saints above,
In solemn troops, and sweet societies,
180 That sing, and singing in their glory move,
And wipe the tears for ever from his eyes.
Now, Lycidas, the shepherds weep no more ;
Henceforth thou art the Genius of the shore,
In thy large recompense, and shalt be good
To all that wander in that perilous flood.

Thus sang the uncouth swain to the oaks and rills,
While the still morn went out with sandals grey :
He touched the tender stops of various quills,
With eager thought warbling his Doric lay :
190 And now the sun had stretched out all the hills,
And now was dropt into the western bay.
At last he rose, and twitched his mantle blue :
To-morrow to fresh woods, and pastures new.

JOHN MILTON, 1637

On his Blindness

WHEN I consider how my light is spent
Ere half my days in this dark world and wide,
And that one talent which is death to hide
Lodged with me useless, though my soul more
bent

To serve therewith my Maker, and present
My true account, lest He returning chide,
“Doth God exact day-labour, light denied?”
I fondly ask: but Patience, to prevent
That murmur, soon replies, “God doth not need
Either man’s work or his own gifts. Who best 10
Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best. His state
Is kingly: thousands at his bidding speed,
And post o’er land and ocean without rest;
They also serve who only stand and wait.”

JOHN MILTON, 1655

From “Paradise Lost”

Satan reaches Paradise (Book IV)

SO on he fares, and to the border comes
Of Eden, where delicious Paradise,
Now nearer, crowns with her enclosure green,
As with a rural mound, the champain head
Of a steep wilderness, whose hairy sides
With thicket overgrown, grotesque and wild,
Access denied; and overhead up-grew
Insuperable height of loftiest shade,
Cedar, and pine, and fir, and branching palm,
A sylvan scene, and, as the ranks ascend 10
Shade above shade, a woody theatre
Of stateliest view. Yet higher than their tops
The verdurous wall of Paradise up-sprung;

Which to our general sire gave prospect large
 Into his nether empire neighbouring round.
 And higher than that wall a circling row
 Of goodliest trees, loaden with fairest fruit,
 Blossoms and fruits at once of golden hue,
 Appeared, with gay enamelled colours mixed ;
 20 On which the sun more glad impressed his beams
 Than in fair evening cloud, or humid bow,
 When God hath showered the earth : so lovely seemed
 That landskip. And of pure now purer air
 Meets his approach, and to the heart inspires
 Vernal delight and joy, able to drive
 All sadness but despair. Now gentle gales,
 Fanning their odoriferous wings, dispense
 Native perfumes, and whisper whence they stole
 Those balmy spoils. As, when to them who sail
 30 Beyond the Cape of Hope, and now are past
 Mozambic, off at sea north-east winds blow
 Sabeian odours from the spicy shore
 Of Araby the Blest, with such delay
 Well pleased they slack their course, and many a
 league
 Cheered with the grateful smell old Ocean smiles ;
 So entertained those odorous sweets the Fiend.

Within Paradise (Book IV)

From that sapphire fount the crisped brooks,
 Rolling on orient pearl and sands of gold,
 With mazy error under pendent shades
 40 Ran nectar, visiting each plant, and fed
 Flowers worthy of Paradise, which not nice Art
 In beds and curious knots, but Nature boon
 Poured forth profuse on hill, and dale, and plain,
 Both where the morning sun first warmly smote
 The open field, and where the unpierced shade
 Imbrowned the noontide bowers. Thus was this place,

A happy rural seat of various view :
 Groves whose rich trees wept odorous gums and balm ;
 Others whose fruit, burnished with golden rind,
 Hung amiable—Hesperian fables true, 50
 If true, here only—and of delicious taste.
 Betwixt them lawns, or level downs, and flocks
 Grazing the tender herb, were interposed,
 Or palmy hillock ; or the flowery lap
 Of some irriguous valley spread her store,
 Flowers of all hue, and without thorn the rose.
 Another side, umbrageous grotts and caves
 Of cool recess, o'er which the mantling vine
 Lays forth her purple grape, and gently creeps
 Luxuriant ; meanwhile murmuring waters fall 60
 Down the slope hills dispersed, or in a lake,
 That to the fringed bank with myrtle crowned
 Her crystal mirror holds, unite their streams.
 The birds their quire apply ; airs, vernal airs,
 Breathing the smell of field and grove, attune
 The trembling leaves, while universal Pan,
 Knit with the Graces and the Hours in dance,
 Led on the eternal Spring.

Evening in Paradise (Book IV)

Now came still Evening on, and Twilight gray
 Had in her sober livery all things clad ; 70
 Silence accompanied ; for beast and bird,
 They to their grassy couch, these to their nests
 Were slunk, all but the wakeful nightingale.
 She all night long her amorous descant sung :
 Silence was pleased. Now glowed the firmament
 With living sapphires ; Hesperus, that led
 The starry host, rode brightest, till the Moon,
 Rising in clouded majesty, at length
 Apparent queen, unveiled her peerless light,
 And o'er the dark her silver mantle threw. 80

Eve's Bower (Book IV)

Thus talking, hand in hand alone they passed
On to their blissful bower. It was a place
Chosen by the sovran Planter, when he framed
All things to Man's delightful use. The roof
Of thickest covert was inwoven shade,
Laurel and myrtle, and what higher grew
Of firm and fragrant leaf; on either side
Acanthus, and each odorous bushy shrub,
Fenced up the verdant wall; each beauteous flower,
90 Iris all hues, roses, and jessamine,
Reared high their flourished heads between, and
wrought
Mosaic; under foot the violet,
Crocus, and hyacinth, with rich inlay
Broidered the ground, more coloured than with stone
Of costliest emblem. Other creature here,
Beast, bird, insect, or worm, durst enter none;
Such was their awe of Man. In shadier bower
More sacred and sequestered, though but feigned,
Pan or Sylvanus never slept, nor Nymph
100 Nor Faunus haunted. Here, in close recess,
With flowers, garlands, and sweet-smelling herbs,
Espoused Eve decked first her nuptial bed,
And heavenly choirs the hymenæan sung.

The Serpent (Book IX)

For now, and since first break of dawn, the Fiend,
Mere serpent in appearance, forth was come,
And on his quest where likeliest he might find
The only two of mankind, but in them
The whole included race, his purposed prey.
In bower and field he sought, where any tuft
110 Of grove or garden-plot more pleasant lay,
Their tendance or plantation for delight;

By fountain or by shady rivulet
 He sought them both, but wished his hap might find
 Eve separate; he wished, but not with hope
 Of what so seldom chanced, when to his wish,
 Beyond his hope, Eve separate he spies,
 Veiled in a cloud of fragrance, where she stood,
 Half-spied, so thick the roses bushing round
 About her glowed, oft stooping to support
 Each flower of tender stalk, whose head, though gay 120
 Carnation, purple, azure, or specked with gold,
 Hung drooping unsustained. Them she upstays
 Gently with myrtle band, mindless the while
 Herself, though fairest unsupported flower,
 From her best prop so far, and storm so nigh.
 Nearer he drew, and many a walk traversed
 Of stateliest covert, cedar, pine, or palm;
 Then voluble and bold, now hid, now seen
 Among thick-woven arborets, and flowers
 Imbordered on each bank, the hand of Eve. 130

.
 Much he the place admired, the person more.
 As one who, long in populous city pent,
 Where houses thick and sewers annoy the air,
 Forth issuing on a summer's morn, to breathe
 Among the pleasant villages and farms
 Adjoined, from each thing met conceives delight—
 The smell of grain, or tedded grass, or kine,
 Or dairy, each rural sight, each rural sound—
 If chance with nymph-like step fair virgin pass,
 What pleasing seemed for her now pleases more, 140
 She most, and in her look sums all delight:
 Such pleasure took the Serpent to behold
 This flowery plat, the sweet recess of Eve
 Thus early, thus alone. Her heavenly form
 Angelic, but more soft and feminine,
 Her graceful innocence, her every air

Of gesture or least action, overawed
His malice, and with rapine sweet bereaved
His fierceness of the fierce intent it brought.
150 That space the Evil One abstracted stood
From his own evil, and for the time remained
Stupidly good, of enmity disarmed,
Of guile, of hate, of envy, of revenge.
But the hot hell that always in him burns,
Though in mid Heaven, soon ended his delight,
And tortures him now more, the more he sees
Of pleasure not for him ordained.

The Forbidden Tree (Book IX)

To whom the wily Adder, blithe and glad :—
“Empress, the way is ready, and not long—
160 Beyond a row of myrtles, on a flat,
Fast by a fountain, one small thicket past
Of blowing myrrh and balm. If thou accept
My conduct, I can bring thee thither soon.”
“Lead, then,” said Eve. He, leading, swiftly rolled
In tangles, and made intricate seem straight,
To mischief swift. Hope elevates, and joy
Brightens his crest. As when a wandering fire,
Compact of unctuous vapour, which the night
Condenses, and the cold environs round,
170 Kindled through agitation to a flame
(Which oft, they say, some evil spirit attends),
Hovering and blazing with delusive light,
Misleads the amazed night-wanderer from his way
To bogs and mires, and oft through pond or pool,
There swallowed up and lost, from succour far :
So glistened the dire Snake, and into fraud
Led Eve, our credulous mother, to the Tree
Of Prohibition, root of all our woe.

The Fruit (Book IX)

So saying, her rash hand in evil hour
Forth-reaching to the fruit, she plucked, she eat. 180
Earth felt the wound, and Nature from her seat,
Sighing through all her works, gave signs of woe
That all was lost. Back to the thicket slunk
The guilty Serpent, and well might, for Eve,
Intent now only on her taste, naught else
Regarded; such delight till then, as seemed,
In fruit she never tasted, whether true,
Or fancied so through expectation high
Of knowledge; nor was Godhead from her thought.
Greedy she ingorged without restraint, 190
And knew not eating death. Sate at length,
And hightened as with wine, jocund and boon,
Thus to herself she pleasingly began:—

“O sovran, virtuous, precious of all trees
In Paradise! of operation blest
To sapience, hitherto obscured, infamed,
And thy fair fruit let hang, as to no end
Created! but henceforth my early care,
Not without song, each morning, and due praise,
Shall tend thee, and the fertile burden ease 200
Of thy full branches, offered free to all;
Till, dieted by thee, I grow mature
In knowledge, as the Gods who all things know.
Though others envy what they cannot give—
For, had the gift been theirs, it had not here
Thus grown! Experience next to thee I owe,
Best guide: not following thee, I had remained
In ignorance; thou open'st Wisdom's way,
And giv'st access, though secret she retire.
And I perhaps am secret; Heaven is high— 210
High, and remote to see from thence distinct
Each thing on Earth; and other care perhaps
May have diverted from continual watch

Our great Forbidder, safe with all his spies
About him. But to Adam in what sort
Shall I appear?

Adam (Book IX)

Adam the while,
Waiting desirous her return, had wove
Of choicest flowers a garland, to adorn
220 Her tresses, and her rural labours crown,
As reapers oft are wont their harvest-queen.
Great joy he promised to his thoughts, and new
Solace in her return, so long delayed;
Yet oft his heart, divine of something ill,
Misgave him. He the faltering measure felt,
And forth to meet her went, the way she took
That morn when first they parted. By the Tree
Of Knowledge he must pass; there he her met,
Scarce from the tree returning; in her hand
230 A bough of fairest fruit, that downy smiled,
New gathered, and ambrosial smell diffused.
To him she hasted; in her face excuse
Came prologue, and apology to prompt,
Which, with bland words at will, she thus
addressed:—

“Hast thou not wondered, Adam, at my stay?
Thee I have missed, and thought it long, deprived
Thy presence—agony of love till now
Not felt, nor shall be twice; for never more
Mean I to try, what rash untried I sought,
240 The pain of absence from thy sight. But strange
Hath been the cause, and wonderful to hear.
This tree is not, as we are told, a tree
Of danger tasted, nor to evil unknown
Opening the way, but of divine effect
To open eyes, and make them Gods who taste;
And hath been tasted such. The Serpent wise,

Or not restrained as we, or not obeying,
Hath eaten of the fruit, and is become
Not dead, as we are threatened, but thenceforth
Endued with human voice and human sense, 250
Reasoning to admiration, and with me
Persuasively hath so prevailed that I
Have also tasted, and have also found
The effects to correspond—opener mine eyes,
Dim erst, dilated spirits, ampler heart,
And growing up to Godhead; which for thee
Chiefly I sought, without thee can despise.
For bliss, as thou hast part, to me is bliss;
Tedious, unshared with thee, and odious soon.
Thou, therefore, also taste, that equal lot 260
May join us, equal joy, as equal love.”

Thus Eve with countenance blithe her story told;
But in her cheek distemper flushing glowed.
On the other side, Adam, soon as he heard
The fatal trespass done by Eve, amazed,
Astonied stood and blank, while horror chill
Ran through his veins, and all his joints relaxed.
From his slack hand the garland wreathed for Eve
Down dropt, and all the faded roses shed.
Speechless he stood and pale, till thus at length 270
First to himself he inward silence broke :—

“O fairest of Creation, last and best
Of all God’s works, creature in whom excelled
Whatever can to sight or thought be formed,
Holy, divine, good, amiable, or sweet!
How art thou lost! how on a sudden lost,
Defaced, deflowered, and now to death devote!
Rather, how hast thou yielded to transgress
The strict forbiddance, how to violate
The sacred fruit forbidden? Some cursed fraud 280
Of enemy hath beguiled thee, yet unknown,
And me with thee hath ruined; for with thee
Certain my resolution is to die.

How can I live without thee? how forgo
Thy sweet converse, and love so dearly joined,
To live again in these wild woods forlorn?
Should God create another Eve, and I
Another rib afford, yet loss of thee
Would never from my heart. No, no! I feel
290 The link of nature draw me: flesh of flesh,
Bone of my bone thou art, and from thy state
Mine never shall be parted, bliss or woe."

.

She embraced him, and for joy
Tenderly wept, much won that he his love
Had so ennobled as of choice to incur
Divine displeasure for her sake, or death.
In recompense (for such compliance bad
Such recompense best merits), from the bough
She gave him of that fair enticing fruit
300 With liberal hand. He scrupled not to eat,
Again his better knowledge, not deceived,
But fondly overcome with female charm.
Earth trembled from her entrails, as again
In pangs, and Nature gave a second groan;
Sky loured, and, muttering thunder, some sad drops
Wept at completing of the mortal Sin
Original; while Adam took no thought,
Eating his fill, nor Eve to iterate
Her former trespass feared, the more to soothe
310 Him with her loved society; that now,
As with new wine intoxicated both,
They swim in mirth, and fancy that they feel
Divinity within them breeding wings
Wherewith to scorn the Earth.

JOHN MILTON, 1667

From "Absalom and Achitophel"

Shaftesbury

OF these the false Achitophel was first;
A name to all succeeding ages curst:
For close designs, and crooked counsels fit;
Sagacious, bold, and turbulent of wit;
Restless, unfixed in principles and place;
In power unpleased, impatient of disgrace:
A fiery soul, which, working out its way,
Fretted the pigmy-body to decay,
And o'er-informed the tenement of clay.
A daring pilot in extremity;
Pleased with the danger, when the waves went high
He sought the storms; but, for a calm unfit,
Would steer too nigh the sands to boast his wit.
Great wits are sure to madness near allied,
And thin partitions do their bounds divide;
Else why should he, with wealth and honour blest,
Refuse his age the needful hours of rest?
Punish a body which he could not please;
Bankrupt of life, yet prodigal of ease?
And all to leave what with his toil he won,
To that unfeathered two-legged thing, a son;
In friendship false, implacable in hate;
Resolved to ruin or to rule the state;
To compass this the triple bond he broke;
The pillars of the public safety shook;
And fitted Israel for a foreign yoke:
Then, seized with fear, yet still affecting fame,
Usurped a patriot's all-atoning name.
So easy still it proves, in factious times,
With public zeal to cancel private crimes.
How safe is treason, and how sacred ill.

10

20

30

Where none can sin against the people's will,
Where crowds can wink, and no offence be known,
Since in another's guilt they find their own!
Yet fame deserved no enemy can grudge;
The statesman we abhor, but praise the judge.

Buckingham

Some of their chiefs were princes of the land;
In the first rank of these did Zimri stand;
A man so various, that he seemed to be
40 Not one, but all mankind's epitome:
Stiff in opinions, always in the wrong;
Was every thing by starts, and nothing long;
But, in the course of one revolving moon,
Was chemist, fiddler, statesman, and buffoon:
Then all for women, painting, rhyming, drinking,
Besides ten thousand freaks that died in thinking.
Blest madman, who could every hour employ,
With something new to wish, or to enjoy!
Railing and praising were his usual themes;
50 And both, to show his judgment, in extremes:
So over violent, or over civil,
That every man with him was God or Devil.
In squandering wealth was his peculiar art:
Nothing went unrewarded but desert.
Beggared by fools, whom still he found too late;
He had his jest, and they had his estate.
He laughed himself from Court; then sought relief
By forming parties, but could ne'er be chief:
For, spite of him, the weight of business fell
60 On Absalom, and wise Achitophel:
Thus, wicked but in will, of means bereft,
He left not faction, but of that was left.

JOHN DRYDEN, 1681

Mac Flecknoe

ALL human things are subject to decay,
And, when fate summons, monarchs must obey.
This Flecknoe found, who, like Augustus, young
Was call'd to empire, and had governed long;
In prose and verse, was owned, without dispute,
Through all the realms of Nonsense, absolute.
This aged prince, now flourishing in peace,
And blessed with issue of a large increase,
Worn out with business, did at length debate
To settle the succession of the state :
And, pondering, which of all his sons was fit
To reign, and wage immortal war with wit,
Cried, "'Tis resolv'd ; for nature pleads, that he
Should only rule, who most resembles me.
Shadwell alone my perfect image bears,
Mature in dulness from his tender years :
Shadwell alone, of all my sons, is he,
Who stands confirmed in full stupidity.
The rest to some faint meaning make pretence,
But Shadwell never deviates into sense.
Some beams of wit on other souls may fall,
Strike through, and make a lucid interval ;
But Shadwell's genuine night admits no ray,
His rising fogs prevail upon the day.
Besides, his goodly fabric fills the eye,
And seems designed for thoughtless majesty :
Thoughtless as monarch oaks, that shade the plain,
And, spread in solemn state, supinely reign,
Heywood and Shirley were but types of thee,
Thou last great prophet of tautology.
Ev'n I, a dunce of more renown than they,
Was sent before but to prepare thy way,
And, coarsely clad in Norwich drugget, came
To teach the nations in thy greater name.
My warbling lute, the lute I whilom strung.

10

20

30

When to king John of Portugal I sung,
Was but the prelude to that glorious day,
When thou on silver Thames did'st cut thy way
With well-timed oars before the royal barge,
40 Swelled with the pride of thy celestial charge;
And big with hymn, commander of an host,
The like was ne'er in Epsom blanket tossed.
Sometimes, as prince of thy harmonious band,
Thou wield'st thy papers in thy threshing hand,
St André's feet ne'er kept more equal time,
Not ev'n the feet of thy own Psyche's rhyme:
Though they in number as in sense excel;
So just, so like tautology, they fell,
That, pale with envy, Singleton forswore
50 The lute and sword, which he in triumph bore,
And vowed he ne'er would act Villerius more."

Here stopped the good old sire, and wept for joy,
In silent raptures of the hopeful boy.

All arguments, but most his plays, persuade,
That for anointed dulness he was made.

.

Now empress Fame had published the renown
Of Shadwell's coronation through the town.
Roused by report of fame, the nations meet,
From near Bunhill, and distant Watling Street.
60 No Persian carpets spread the imperial way,
But scattered limbs of mangled poets lay:
Much Heywood, Shirley, Ogleby there lay,
But loads of Shadwell almost choked the way.
Bilked stationers for yeomen stood prepared,
And Herringman was captain of the guard.
The hoary prince in majesty appeared,
High on a throne of his own labours reared.
At his right hand our young Ascanius sate,
Rome's other hope, and pillar of the state.
70 His brows thick fogs, instead of glories, grace,

And lambent dulness played around his face.
 As Hannibal did to the altars come,
 Swore by his sire, a mortal foe to Rome ;
 So Shadwell swore, nor should his vow be vain,
 That he till death true dulness would maintain ;
 And, in his father's right, and realm's defence,
 Ne'er to have peace with wit, nor truce with sense.
 The king himself the sacred unction made,
 As king by office, and as priest by trade :
 In his sinister hand, instead of ball,
 He placed a mighty mug of potent ale ;
Love's Kingdom to his right he did convey,
 At once his sceptre, and his rule of sway ;
 His temples, last, with poppies were o'er-spread,
 That nodding seemed to consecrate his head.
 Just at the point of time, if fame not lie,
 On his left hand twelve reverend owls did fly.
 So Romulus, 'tis sung, by Tiber's brook,
 Presage of sway from twice six vultures took.
 The admiring throng loud acclamations make,
 And omens of his future empire take.
 The sire then shook the honours of his head,
 And from his brows damps of oblivion shed
 Full on the filial dulness : long he stood,
 Repelling from his breast the raging god.

80

90

.
 Then thus continued he : " My son, advance
 Still in new impudence, new ignorance.
 Success let others teach, learn thou from me
 Pangs without birth, and fruitless industry.
 Let Virtuosos in five years be writ ;
 Yet not one thought accuse thy toil of wit.
 Let gentle George in triumph tread the stage,
 Make Dorimant betray, and Loveit rage ;
 Let Cully, Cockwood, Fopling, charm the pit,
 And in their folly show the writer's wit.

100

Yet still thy fools shall stand in thy defence,
 And justify their author's want of sense.
 Let them be all by thy own model made
 Of dulness, and desire no foreign aid ;
 110 That they to future ages may be known,
 Not copies drawn, but issue of thy own.
 Nay, let thy men of wit too be the same,
 And full of thee, and differing but in name.
 But let no alien Sedley interpose,
 To lard with wit thy hungry Epsom prose.
 And when false flowers of rhetoric thou would'st cull,
 Trust nature, do not labour to be dull ;
 But write thy best, and top ; and, in each line,
 Sir Formal's oratory will be thine :
 120 Sir Formal, though unsought, attends thy quill,
 And does thy northern dedications fill.
 Nor let false friends seduce thy mind to fame,
 By arrogating Jonson's hostile name.
 Let Father Flecknoe fire thy mind with praise,
 And uncle Ogleby thy envy raise.
 Thou art my blood, where Jonson has no part :
 What share have we in nature, or in art ?
 Where did his wit on learning fix a brand,
 And rail at arts he did not understand ?
 130 Where made he love in prince Nicander's vein,
 Or swept the dust in Psyche's humble strain ?
 When did his muse from Fletcher scenes purloin,
 As thou whole Etherege dost transfuse to thine ?
 But so transfused, as oils and waters flow,
 His always floats above, thine sinks below.
 This is thy province, this thy wondrous way,
 New humours to invent for each new play :
 This is that boasted bias of thy mind,
 By which one way to dulness 'tis inclined :
 140 Which makes thy writings lean on one side still,
 And, in all changes, that way bends thy will.
 Nor let thy mountain-belly make pretence

Of likeness; thine's a tympany of sense.
 A tun of man in thy large bulk is writ,
 But sure thou'rt but a kilderkin of wit.
 Like mine, thy gentle numbers feebly creep;
 Thy tragic muse gives smiles, thy comic sleep.
 With whate'er gall thou sett'st thyself to write,
 Thy inoffensive satires never bite.
 In thy felonious heart though venom lies,
 It does but touch thy Irish pen, and dies.
 Thy Genius calls thee not to purchase fame
 In keen Iambics, but mild Anagram.
 Leave writing plays, and choose for thy command,
 Some peaceful province in Acrostic land.
 There thou may'st Wings display and Altars raise,
 And torture one poor word ten thousand ways.
 Or, if thou would'st thy different talents suit,
 Set thy own songs, and sing them to thy lute."

150

He said; but his last words were scarcely heard :
 For Bruce and Longvil had a trap prepared,
 And down they sent the yet declaiming bard.
 Sinking he left his drugget robe behind,
 Borne upwards by a subterranean wind.
 The mantle fell to the young prophet's part,
 With double portion of his father's art.

160

JOHN DRYDEN, 1682

From "The Rape of the Lock"

Ariel and Belinda (Canto I)

SOL through white curtains shot a timorous ray,
 And oped those eyes that must eclipse the day :
 Now lap-dogs give themselves the rousing shake,
 And sleepless lovers, just at twelve, awake :
 Thrice rung the bell, the slipper knock'd the ground,
 And the press'd watch return'd a silver sound.

Belinda still her downy pillow prest,
 Her guardian SYLPH prolonged the balmy rest :
 'Twas he had summoned to her silent bed
 10 The morning-dream that hover'd o'er her head :
 A youth more glittering than a birth-night beau
 (That e'en in slumber caused her cheek to glow)
 Seem'd to her ear his winning lips to lay,
 And thus in whispers said, or seem'd to say :
 "Fairest of mortals, thou distinguish'd care
 Of thousand bright inhabitants of air !
 If e'er one vision touch'd thy infant thought,
 Of all the nurse and all the priest have taught ;
 Of airy elves by moonlight shadows seen,
 20 The silver token, and the circled green,
 Or virgins visited by angel-powers
 With golden crowns and wreaths of heavenly
 flowers
 Hear and believe ! thy own importance know,
 Nor bound thy narrow views to things below.
 Some secret truths, from learned pride conceal'd,
 To maids alone and children are reveal'd :
 What though no credit doubting wits may give ?
 The fair and innocent shall still believe.
 Know, then, unnumber'd spirits round thee fly,
 30 The light militia of the lower sky.

.

Of these am I, who thy protection claim,
 A watchful sprite, and Ariel is my name.
 Late, as I ranged the crystal wilds of air,
 In the clear mirror of thy ruling star
 I saw, alas ! some dread event impend,
 Ere to the main this morning sun descend,
 But heaven reveals not what, or how, or where :
 Warn'd by the sylph, oh, pious maid, beware !
 This to disclose is all thy guardian can :
 40 Beware of all, but most beware of man ! "

He said; when Shock, who thought she slept too long,
Leap'd up, and waked his mistress with his tongue.
'Twas then, Belinda, if report say true,
Thy eyes first open'd on a billet-doux;
Wounds, charms, and ardours, were no sooner read,
But all the vision vanish'd from thy head.

And now, unveil'd, the toilet stands display'd,
Each silver vase in mystic order laid.
First, robed in white, the nymph intent adores,
With head uncover'd, the cosmetic powers. 50
A heavenly image in the glass appears,
To that she bends, to that her eyes she rears;
Th' inferior priestess, at her altar's side,
Trembling begins the sacred rites of pride.
Unnumber'd treasures ope at once, and here
The various offerings of the world appear;
From each she nicely culls with curious toil,
And decks the goddess with the glittering spoil.
This casket India's glowing gems unlocks,
And all Arabia breathes from yonder box. 60
The tortoise here and elephant unite,
Transform'd to combs, the speckled, and the white.
Here files of pins extend their shining rows,
Puffs, powders, patches, bibles, billets-doux.
Now awful beauty puts on all its arms;
The fair each moment rises in her charms,
Repairs her smiles, awakens every grace,
And calls forth all the wonders of her face;
Sees by degrees a purer blush arise,
And keener lightnings quicken in her eyes. 70
The busy sylphs surround their darling care,
These set the head, and those divide the hair,
Some fold the sleeve, whilst others plait the gown;
And Betty's praised for labours not her own.

The Lock (Canto II)

Not with more glories, in the ethereal plain,
The sun first rises o'er the purpled main,
Than, issuing forth, the rival of his beams
Launch'd on the bosom of the silver Thames.
Fair nymphs, and well-dress'd youths around her
shone,

80 But every eye was fix'd on her alone.

On her white breast a sparkling cross she wore,
Which Jews might kiss, and Infidels adore.
Her lively looks a sprightly mind disclose,
Quick as her eyes, and as unfix'd as those :
Favours to none, to all she smiles extends ;
Oft she rejects, but never once offends.

Bright as the sun, her eyes the gazers strike,
And like the sun, they shine on all alike.

Yet graceful ease, and sweetness void of pride,

90 Might hide her faults, if belles had faults to hide :
If to her share some female errors fall,
Look on her face, and you'll forget 'em all.

This nymph, to the destruction of mankind,
Nourish'd two locks, which graceful hung behind
In equal curls, and well conspir'd to deck
With shining ringlets the smooth ivory neck.
Love in these labyrinths his slaves detains,
And mighty hearts are held in slender chains.

With hairy springes we the birds betray,

100 Slight lines of hair surprise the finny prey,
Fair tresses man's imperial race insnare,
And beauty draws us with a single hair.

The adventurous Baron the bright locks admired ;
He saw, he wish'd, and to the prize aspired.
Resolved to win, he meditates the way,
By force to ravish, or by fraud betray ;
For when success a lover's toil attends,
Few ask, if fraud or force attain'd his ends

For this, ere Phœbus rose, he had implored
Propitious Heaven, and every power adored,
But chiefly Love—to Love an altar built,
Of twelve vast French romances, neatly gilt.
There lay three garters, half a pair of gloves,
And all the trophies of his former loves;
With tender billets-doux he lights the pyre,
And breathes three amorous sighs to raise the fire.
Then prostrate falls, and begs with ardent eyes
Soon to obtain, and long possess the prize:
The powers gave ear, and granted half his prayer,
The rest, the winds dispersed in empty air.

110

120

The Attendant Sylphs (Canto II)

But now secure the painted vessel glides,
The sunbeams trembling on the floating tides:
While melting music steals upon the sky,
And soften'd sounds along the waters die;
Smooth flow the waves, the zephyrs gently play,
Belinda smiled, and all the world was gay—
All but the sylph; with careful thoughts opprest,
The impending woe sat heavy on his breast.
He summons strait his denizens of air;
The lucid squadrons round the sails repair:
Soft o'er the shrouds ærial whispers breathe,
That seem'd but zephyrs to the train beneath.
Some to the sun their insect-wings unfold,
Waft on the breeze, or sink in clouds of gold;
Transparent forms, too fine for mortal sight,
Their fluid bodies half dissolved in light,
Loose to the wind their airy garments flew,
Thin glittering textures of the filmy dew,
Dipt in the richest tincture of the skies,
Where light disports in ever-mingling dyes;
While every beam new transient colours flings,
Colours that change whene'er they wave their wings.

130

140

A Game of Cards (Canto III)

Meanwhile, declining from the noon of day,
The sun obliquely shoots his burning ray :
The hungry judges soon the sentence sign,
And wretches hang that jurymen may dine ;
The merchant from the Exchange returns in peace,
And the long labours of the toilet cease.
Belinda now, whom thirst of fame invites,
150 Burns to encounter two adventurous knights,
At ombre singly to decide their doom ;
And swells her breast with conquests yet to come.
Straight the three bands prepare in arms to join,
Each band the number of the sacred Nine.
Soon as she spreads her hand, the aërial guard
Descend, and sit on each important card :
First Ariel perch'd upon a Matadore,
Then each according to the rank they bore ;
For sylphs, yet mindful of their ancient race,
160 Are, as when women, wondrous fond of place.
Behold, four kings in majesty revered,
With hoary whiskers and a forked beard ;
And four fair queens whose hands sustain a flower,
The expressive emblem of their softer power ;
Four knaves in garbs succinct, a trusty band,
Caps on their heads, and halberts in their hand ;
And party-colour'd troops, a shining train,
Draw forth to combat on the velvet plain.
The skilful nymph reviews her force with care :
170 Let Spades be trumps ! she said, and trumps they were.
Now move to war her sable Matadores,
In show like leaders of the swarthy Moors,
Spadillio first, unconquerable lord !
Led off two captive trumps, and swept the board.
As many more Manillio forced to yield,
And marched a victor from the verdant field.
Him Basto follow'd, but his fate more hard

Gain'd but one trump and one plebeian card.
With his broad sabre next, a chief in years,
The hoary majesty of spades appears,
Puts forth one manly leg, to sight reveal'd,
The rest, his many-colour'd robe conceal'd.
The rebel knave, who dares his prince engage,
Proves the just victim of his royal rage.
Even mighty Pam, that kings and queens o'erthrew
And mow'd down armies in the fights of Loo,
Sad chance of war! now destitute of aid,
Falls undistinguish'd by the victor spade!

180

Thus far both armies to Belinda yield.
Now to the Baron Fate inclines the field;
His warlike amazon her host invades,
The imperial consort of the crown of Spades.
The Club's black tyrant first her victim died,
Spite of his haughty mien and barbarous pride:
What boots the regal circle on his head,
His giant limbs, in state unwieldy spread;
That long behind he trails his pompous robe,
And, of all monarchs, only grasps the globe?
The Baron now his Diamonds pours apace;
The embroider'd King who shows but half his face,
And his refulgent queen, with powers combined
Of broken troops an easy conquest find.
Clubs, Diamonds, Hearts, in wild disorder seen,
With throngs promiscuous strew the level green.
Thus when dispersed a routed army runs,
Of Asia's troops, and Afric's sable sons,
With like confusion different nations fly,
Of various habit, and of various dye;
The pierced battalions disunited fall,
In heaps on heaps; one fate o'erwhelms them all.

190

200

210

The Knave of Diamonds tries his wily arts,
And wins (oh shameful chance!) the Queen of Hearts.
At this, the blood the virgin's cheek forsook,
A livid paleness spreads o'er all her look;

She sees, and trembles at the approaching ill,
 Just in the jaws of ruin, and codille.
 And now (as oft in some distemper'd state)
 On one nice trick depends the general fate.
 An Ace of Hearts steps forth : the King, unseen,
 220 Lurk'd in her hand, and mourn'd his captive Queen :
 He springs to vengeance with an eager pace,
 And falls like thunder on the prostrate Ace.
 The nymph exulting fills with shouts the sky ;
 The walls, the woods, and long canals reply.

The Rape (Canto III)

But when to mischief mortals bend their will,
 How soon they find fit instruments of ill !
 Just then Clarissa drew, with tempting grace,
 A two-edged weapon from her shining case :
 So ladies in romance assist their knight,
 230 Present the spear, and arm him for the fight.
 He takes the gift with reverence, and extends
 The little engine on his fingers' ends ;
 This just behind Belinda's neck he spread,
 As o'er the fragrant steams she bends her head.
 Swift to the Lock a thousand sprites repair,
 A thousand wings, by turns, blow back the hair ;
 And thrice they twitch'd the diamond in her ear ;
 Thrice she look'd back, and thrice the foe drew near.
 Just in that instant anxious Ariel sought
 240 The close recesses of the Virgin's thought :
 As on the nosegay in her breast reclined,
 He watch'd the ideas rising in her mind,
 Sudden he view'd, in spite of all her art,
 An earthly lover lurking at her heart.
 Amazed, confused, he found his power expired,
 Resign'd to fate, and with a sigh retired.

The peer now spreads the glittering forfex wide,
 To inclose the Lock ; now joins it, to divide.

Even then, before the fatal engine closed,
A wretched sylph too fondly interposed; 250
Fate urged the shears, and cut the Sylph in twain,
(But airy substance soon unites again;)
The meeting points the sacred hair dissever
From the fair head, for ever, and for ever!

Then flash'd the living lightning from her eyes,
And screams of horror rend the affrighted skies;
Not louder shrieks to pitying heaven are cast,
When husbands, or when lap-dogs breathe their last;
Or when rich China vessels, fallen from high,
In glittering dust and painted fragments lie! 260

Belinda's Distress (Canto IV)

Then see! the nymph in beauteous grief appears,
Her eyes half-languishing, half-drown'd in tears;
On her heav'd bosom hung her drooping head,
Which with a sigh she rais'd, and thus she said:

“For ever cursed be this detested day,
Which snatch'd my best, my fav'rite curl away!
Happy! ah ten times happy had I been,
If Hampton-Court these eyes had never seen!
Yet am not I the first mistaken maid,
By love of courts to numerous ills betray'd. 270
Oh had I rather unadmired remain'd

In some lone isle, or distant northern land;
Where the gilt chariot never marks the way,
Where none learn ombre, none e'er taste Bohea!
There kept my charms concealed from mortal eye,
Like roses, that in deserts bloom and die.
What moved my mind with youthful lords to roam?
Oh had I staid, and said my prayers at home!

'Twas this the morning omens seem'd to tell,
Thrice from my trembling hand the patch-box fell; 280
The tottering China shook without a wind;
Nay, Poll sat mute, and Shock was most unkind!

A sylph, too, warn'd me of the threats of fate,
In mystic visions, now believed too late!
See the poor remnants of these slighted hairs!
My hands shall rend what even thy rapine spares.
These in two sable ringlets taught to break,
Once gave new beauties to the snowy neck;
The sister-lock now sits uncouth, alone,
290 And in its fellow's fate foresees its own;
Uncurl'd it hangs, the fatal shears demands,
And tempts, once more, thy sacrilegious hands.
Oh hadst thou, cruel! been content to seize
Hairs less in sight, or any hairs but these!"

The Combat (Canto V)

"To arms! to arms!" the fierce virago cries,
And swift as lightning to the combat flies.
All side in parties, and begin the attack;
Fans clap, silks rustle, and tough whalebones
crack;
Heroes' and heroines' shouts confusedly rise,
300 And bass and treble voices strike the skies.
No common weapons in their hands are found,
Like gods they fight, nor dread a mortal wound.
So when bold Homer makes the gods engage,
And heav'nly breasts with human passions rage;
'Gainst Pallas, Mars; Latona, Hermes arms;
And all Olympus rings with loud alarms:
Jove's thunder roars, heav'n trembles all around,
Blue Neptune storms, the bellowing deeps resound:
Earth shakes her nodding towers, the ground gives
way,
310 And the pale ghosts start at the flash of day!

.

See, fierce Belinda on the Baron flies,
With more than usual lightning in her eyes:

Nor fear'd the chief the unequal fight to try,
Who sought no more than on his foe to die.
But this bold lord, with manly strength endued,
She with one finger and a thumb subdued :
Just where the breath of life his nostrils drew,
A charge of snuff the wily virgin threw ;
The gnomes direct, to every atom just,
The pungent grains of titillating dust.
Sudden with starting tears each eye o'erflows,
And the high dome re-echoes to his nose.

320

"Now meet thy fate !" incensed Belinda cried,
And drew a deadly bodkin from her side.
(The same, his ancient personage to deck,
Her great-great-grandsire wore about his neck,
In three seal-rings ; which after, melted down,
Form'd a vast buckle for his widow's gown :
Her infant grandame's whistle next it grew,
The bells she jingled, and the whistle blew ;
Then in a bodkin graced her mother's hairs,
Which long she wore, and now Belinda wears.)

330

"Boast not my fall" (he cried) "insulting foe !
Thou by some other shalt be laid as low.
Nor think, to die dejects my lofty mind ;
All that I dread is leaving you behind !
Rather than so, ah ! let me still survive,
And burn in Cupid's flames—but burn alive !"

"Restore the Lock !" she cries ; and all around,
"Restore the Lock !" the vaulted roofs rebound.
Not fierce Othello, in so loud a strain,
Roar'd for the handkerchief that caused his pain,
But see how oft ambitious aims are cross'd,
And chiefs contend till all the prize is lost !
The Lock, obtain'd with guilt, and kept with pain,
In every place is sought, but sought in vain :
With such a prize no mortal must be blest,
So Heaven decrees ! with Heaven who can contest ?

340

The Fate of the Lock (Canto V)

Some thought it mounted to the lunar sphere,
350 Since all things lost on earth are treasured there.
There heroes' wits are kept in ponderous vases,
And beaux' in snuff-boxes and tweezer-cases;
There broken vows and death-bed alms are found,
And lovers' hearts with ends of riband bound,
The courtier's promises, and sick man's prayers,
The smiles of harlots, and the tears of heirs,
Cages for gnats, and chains to yoke a flea,
Dried butterflies, and tomes of casuistry.

But trust the Muse—she saw it upward rise,
360 Though mark'd by none but quick, poetic eyes:
(So Rome's great founder to the heavens withdrew,
To Proculus alone confess'd in view :)
A sudden star, it shot through liquid air,
And drew behind a radiant trail of hair.
Not Berenice's locks first rose so bright,
The heav'ns bespangling with dishevell'd light.
The sylphs behold it kindling as it flies,
And pleased pursue its progress through the skies.

This the *beau monde* shall from the Mall survey,
370 And hail with music its propitious ray;
This the blest lover shall for Venus take,
And send up vows from Rosamonda's lake;
This Partridge soon shall view in cloudless skies,
When next he looks through Galileo's eyes;
And hence the egregious wizard shall foredoom
The fate of Louis, and the fall of Rome.

Then cease, bright nymph! to mourn thy ravish'd
hair,
Which adds new glory to the shining sphere!
Not all the tresses that fair heads can boast,
380 Shall draw such envy as the Lock you lost.
For after all the murders of your eye,
When, after millions slain, yourself shall die:

When those fair suns shall set, as set they must,
And all those tresses shall be laid in dust,
This lock the Muse shall consecrate to fame,
And 'midst the stars inscribe Belinda's name.

ALEXANDER POPE, 1712-14

The Seasons

From "Summer"

To me be Nature's volume broad-displayed,
And to peruse its all-instructing page,
Or, haply catching inspiration thence,
Some easy passage raptured to translate,
My sole delight—as through the falling glooms
Pensive I stray, or with the rising dawn
On fancy's eagle-wing excursive soar.

Now flaming up the heavens, the potent sun
Melts into limpid air the high-raised clouds
And morning fogs that hovered round the hills 10
In party-coloured bands, till wide unveiled
The face of Nature shines, from where earth seems,
Far-stretched around, to meet the bending sphere.

Half in a blush of clustering roses lost,
Dew-dropping Coolness to the shade retires,
There, on the verdant turf or flowery bed,
By gelid founts and careless rills to muse;
While tyrant Heat, disspreading through the sky
With rapid sway, his burning influence darts
On man, and beast, and herb, and tepid stream. 20

Who can unpitying see the flowery race,
Shed by the morn, their new-flushed bloom resign
Before the parching beam? So fade the fair
When fevers revel through their azure veins,
But one, the lofty follower of the sun,

Sad when he sets, shuts up her yellow leaves,
Drooping all night; and, when he warm returns,
Points her enamoured bosom to his ray.

Home from his morning task the swain retreats,
30 His flock before him stepping to the fold;
While the full-uddered mother lows around
The cheerful cottage, then expecting food,
The food of innocence and health. The daw,
The rook, and magpie, to the grey-grown oaks
That the calm village in their verdant arms
Sheltering, embrace, direct their lazy flight;
Where on the mingling boughs they sit embowered
All the hot noon, till cooler hours arise.
Faint underneath the household fowls convene;
40 And in a corner of the buzzing shade
The housedog, with the vacant greyhound, lies
Out-stretched and sleepy. In his slumbers one
Attacks the nightly thief, and one exults
O'er hill and dale; till, wakened by the wasp,
They starting snap. Nor shall the muse disdain
To let the little noisy summer-race
Live in her lay and flutter through her song;
Not mean though simple,—to the sun allied,
From him they draw their animating fire.

.

50 Resounds the living surface of the ground.
Nor undelightful is the ceaseless hum
To him who muses through the woods at noon;
Or drowsy shepherd, as he lies reclined
With half-shut eyes beneath the floating shade
Of willows grey, close-crowding o'er the brook.

Gradual from these what numerous kinds descend,
Evading even the microscopic eye!
Full nature swarms with life; one wondrous mass
Of animals, or atoms organised,
60 Waiting the vital breath, when Parent-Heaven

Shall bid his spirit blow. The hoary fen
In putrid streams emits the living cloud
Of pestilence. Through subterranean cells,
Where searching sunbeams scarce can find a way,
Earth animated heaves. The flowery leaf
Wants not its soft inhabitants. Secure
Within its winding citadel the stone
Holds multitudes. But chief the forest-boughs,
That dance unnumbered to the playful breeze,
The downy orchard, and the melting pulp
Of mellow fruit the nameless nations feed
Of evanescent insects. Where the pool
Stands mantled o'er with green, invisible
Amid the floating verdure, millions stray.
Each liquid too, whether it pierces, soothes,
Inflames, refreshes, or exalts the taste,
With various forms abounds. Nor is the stream
Of purest crystal, nor the lucid air,
Though one transparent vacancy it seems,
Void of their unseen people. These, concealed
By the kind art of forming Heaven, escape
The grosser eye of man; for, if the worlds
In worlds enclosed should on his senses burst,
From cates ambrosial and the nectared bowl
He would abhorrent turn, and in dead night,
When silence sleeps o'er all, be stunned with noise.

70

80

.

Now swarms the village o'er the jovial mead,—
The rustic youth, brown with meridian toil,
Healthful and strong; full as the summer rose
Blown by prevailing suns, the ruddy maid,
Half naked, swelling on the sight, and all
Her kindled graces burning o'er her cheek.
Even stooping age is here; and infant hands
Trail the long rake, or, with the fragrant load
O'ercharged, amid the kind oppression roll.

90

Wide flies the tedded grain ; all in a row
Advancing broad, or wheeling round the field,
They spread their breathing harvest to the sun,
That throws refreshful round a rural smell ;
100 Or, as they rake the green-appearing ground,
And drive the dusky wave along the mead,
The russet haycock rises thick behind,
In order gay ; while, heard from dale to dale,
Waking the breeze, resounds the blended voice
Of happy labour, love, and social glee.

Or, rushing thence in one diffusive band,
They drive the troubled flocks, by many a dog
Compelled, to where the mazy-running brook
Forms a deep pool, this bank abrupt and high,
110 And that fair-spreading in a pebbled shore.
Urged to the giddy brink, much is the toil,
The clamour much, of men, and boys, and dogs,
Ere the soft fearful people to the flood
Commit their woolly sides ; and oft the swain,
On some impatient seizing, hurls them in.
Emboldened then, nor hesitating more,
Fast, fast they plunge amid the flashing wave,
And panting labour to the farthest shore.
Repeated this, till deep the well-washed fleece
120 Has drunk the flood, and from his lively haunt
The trout is banished by the sordid stream.
Heavy and dripping to the breezy brow
Slow move the harmless race ; where, as they spread
Their swelling treasures to the sunny ray,
Inly disturbed, and wondering what this wild
Outrageous tumult means, their loud complaints
The country fill, and, tossed from rock to rock,
Incessant bleatings run around the hills.
At last of snowy white, the gathered flocks
130 Are in the wattled pen innumerable pressed,
Head above head ; and, ranged in lusty rows,
The shepherds sit, and whet the sounding shears.

The housewife waits to roll her fleecy stores,
With all her gay-drest maids attending round.
One, chief, in gracious dignity enthroned,
Shines o'er the rest the pastoral queen, and rays
Her smiles sweet-beaming on her shepherd-king;
While the glad circle round them yield their souls
To festive mirth, and wit that knows no gall.

Meantime their joyous task goes on apace.
Some mingling stir the melted tar, and some
Deep on the new-shorn vagrant's heaving side
To stamp his master's cipher ready stand;
Others the unwilling wether drag along;
And, glorying in his might, the sturdy boy
Holds by the twisted horns the indignant ram.
Behold where bound, and of its robe bereft
By needy man, that all-depending lord,
How meek, how patient the mild creature lies!
What softness in its melancholy face,
What dumb-complaining innocence appears!
Fear not, ye gentle tribes, 'tis not the knife
Of horrid slaughter that is o'er you waved;
No, 'tis the tender swain's well-guided shears,
Who having now, to pay his annual care,
Borrowed your fleece, to you a cumbrous load,
Will send you bounding to your hills again.

140

150

160

A simple scene! Yet hence Britannia sees
Her solid grandeur rise: hence she commands
The exalted stores of every brighter clime,
The treasures of the sun without his rage:
Hence, fervent all with culture, toil, and arts,
Wide glows her land: her dreadful thunder hence
Rides o'er the waves sublime, and now, even now,
Impending hangs o'er Gallia's humbled coast;
Hence rules the circling deep, and awes the world.

JAMES THOMSON, 1727

Sonnet

On the Death of Richard West

IN vain to me the smiling mornings shine,
And redd'ning Phœbus lifts his golden fire :
The birds in vain their amorous descant join ;
Or cheerful fields resume their green attire
These ears, alas ! for other notes repine,
A different object do these eyes require :
My lonely anguish melts no heart but mine ;
And in my breast the imperfect joys expire.
Yet morning smiles the busy race to cheer,
10 And new-born pleasure brings to happier men :
The fields to all their wonted tribute bear :
To warm their little loves the birds complain :
I fruitless mourn to him that cannot hear,
And weep the more, because I weep in vain.

THOMAS GRAY, 1742

Elegy written in a Country Churchyard

THE curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd wind slowly o'er the lea,
The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds :

Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tower
The moping owl does to the moon complain 10
Of such as, wandering near her secret bower,
Molest her ancient solitary reign.

Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade,
Where heaves the turf in many a mouldering heap,
Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

The breezy call of incense-breathing morn,
The swallow twittering from the straw-built shed,
The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,
No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed. 20

For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn,
Or busy housewife ply her evening care;
No children run to lisp their sire's return,
Or climb his knees the envied kiss to share.

Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield,
Their furrow oft the stubborn gleve has broke;
How jocund did they drive their team afield!
How bowed the woods beneath their sturdy stroke!

Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys, and destiny obscure; 30
Nor Grandeur hear with a disdainful smile
The short and simple annals of the poor.

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Awaits alike th' inevitable hour.
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

Nor you, ye proud, impute to these the fault,
If Memory o'er their tomb no trophies raise,
Where through the long-drawn aisle and fretted vault
The pealing anthem swells the note of praise. 40

Can storied urn or animated bust

Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath ?
Can Honour's voice provoke the silent dust,
Or Flattery soothe the dull cold ear of Death ?

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid

Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire ;
Hands, that the rod of empire might have sway'd,
Or wak'd to ecstasy the living lyre :

But Knowledge to their eyes her ample page

50 Rich with the spoils of time did ne'er unroll ;
Chill Penury repress'd their noble rage,
And froze the genial current of the soul.

Full many a gem of purest ray serene

The dark unfathom'd caves of ocean bear ;
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

Some village-Hampden, that with dauntless breast

The little tyrant of his fields withstood,
Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest,
60 Some Cromwell guiltless of his country's blood.

Th' applause of list'ning senates to command,

The threats of pain and ruin to despise,
To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,
And read their history in a nation's eyes—

Their lot forbad : nor circumscrib'd alone

Their growing virtues, but their crimes confined ;
Forbad to wade through slaughter to a throne,
And shut the gates of mercy on mankind ;

The struggling pangs of conscious truth to hide,

70 To quench the blushes of ingenuous shame,
Or heap the shrine of Luxury and Pride
With incense kindled at the Muse's flame.

Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife
Their sober wishes never learn'd to stray ;
Along the cool, sequester'd vale of life
They kept the noiseless tenour of their way.

Yet ev'n these bones from insult to protect,
Some frail memorial still erected nigh,
With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture deck'd,
Implores the passing tribute of a sigh. 80

Their name, their years, spelt by th' unletter'd Muse,
The place of fame and elegy supply :
And many a holy text around she strews,
That teach the rustic moralist to die.

For who, to dumb Forgetfulness a prey,
This pleasing anxious being e'er resign'd,
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
Nor cast one longing lingering look behind ?

On some fond breast the parting soul relies,
Some pious drops the closing eye requires ; 90
E'en from the tomb the voice of Nature cries,
E'en in our ashes live their wonted fires.

For thee, who, mindful of th' unhonour'd dead,
Dost in these lines their artless tale relate ;
If chance, by lonely contemplation led,
Some kindred spirit shall inquire thy fate,—

Haply some hoary-headed swain may say,
“Oft have we seen him at the peep of dawn
Brushing with hasty steps the dews away,
To meet the sun upon the upland lawn : 100

“There at the foot of yonder nodding beech,
That wreathes its old fantastic roots so high,
His listless length at noontide would he stretch,
And pore upon the brook that babbles by.

“Hard by yon wood, now smiling as in scorn,
Mutt’ring his wayward fancies would he rove;
Now drooping, woeful-wan, like one forlorn,
Or craz’d with care, or cross’d in hopeless love.

110 “One morn I miss’d him on the custom’d hill,
Along the heath, and near his fav’rite tree,
Another came; nor yet beside the rill,
Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood was he:

“The next with dirges due in sad array
Slow through the church-way path we saw him
borne,—

Approach and read (for thou canst read) the lay
Grav’d on the stone beneath yon aged thorn.”

The Epitaph

Here rests his head upon the lap of Earth
A Youth to Fortune and to Fame unknown;
Fair Science frown’d not on his humble birth,
120 And Melancholy mark’d him for her own.

Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere;
Heaven did a recompense as largely send:
He gave to Misery all he had, a tear,
He gain’d from Heaven (’twas all he wished) a
friend.

No farther seek his merits to disclose,
Or draw his frailties from their dread abode,
(There they alike in trembling hope repose),
The bosom of his Father and his God.

THOMAS GRAY, 1750

The Progress of Poesy

A Pindaric Ode

I. 1

Awake, Æolian lyre, awake,
And give to rapture all thy trembling strings.
From Helicon's harmonious springs

A thousand rills their mazy progress take :
The laughing flowers that round them blow,
Drink life and fragrance as they flow.
Now the rich stream of music winds along,
Deep, majestic, smooth, and strong,
Thro' verdant vales, and Ceres' golden reign :
Now rolling down the steep amain,
Headlong, impetuous, see it pour ;
The rocks and nodding groves rebellow to the roar.

10

I. 2

Oh ! Sovereign of the willing soul,
Parent of sweet and solemn-breathing airs,
Enchanting shell ! the sullen Cares

And frantic Passions hear thy soft control.
On Thracia's hills the Lord of War
Has curb'd the fury of his car,
And dropt his thirsty lance at thy command.
Perching on the sceptred hand
Of Jove, thy magic lulls the feather'd king
With ruffled plumes, and flagging wing :
Quench'd in dark clouds of thunder lie
The terror of his beak, and lightnings of his eye.

20

I. 3

Thee the voice, the dance, obey,
Temper'd to thy warbled lay.
O'er Idalia's velvet-green,
The rosy-crowned Loves are seen

On Cytherea's day,
30 With antic Sport, and blue-eyed Pleasures,
Frisking light in frolic measures;
Now pursuing, now retreating,
Now in circling troops they meet:
To brisk notes in cadence beating,
Glance their many-twinkling feet.
Slow melting strains their Queen's approach declare:
Where'er she turns the Graces homage pay.
With arms sublime, that float upon the air,
In gliding state she wins her easy way:
40 O'er her warm cheek and rising bosom move
The bloom of young Desire and purple light of Love.

II. 1

Man's feeble race what ills await!
Labour, and Penury, the racks of Pain,
Disease, and Sorrow's weeping train,
And Death, sad refuge from the storms of Fate!
The fond complaint, my Song, disprove,
And justify the laws of Jove.
Say, has he giv'n in vain the heav'nly Muse?
Night, and all her sickly dews,
50 Her spectres wan, and birds of boding cry,
He gives to range the dreary sky;
Till down the eastern cliffs afar
Hyperion's march they spy, and glitt'ring shafts of
war.

II. 2

In climes beyond the solar road,
Where shaggy forms o'er ice-built mountains roam,
The Muse has broke the twilight gloom
To cheer the shivering native's dull abode.
And oft, beneath the od'rous shade
Of Chili's boundless forests laid,
60 She deigns to hear the savage youth repeat,
In loose numbers wildly sweet,

Their feather-cinctur'd chiefs, and dusky loves.
Her track, where'er the Goddess roves,
Glory pursue, and generous Shame,
The unconquerable Mind, and Freedom's holy flame.

II. 3

Woods, that wave o'er Delphi's steep,
Isles, that crown th' Ægean deep,
Fields, that cool Ilissus laves,
Or where Mæander's amber waves
In lingering lab'rinth creep, 70
How do your tuneful echoes languish
Mute, but to the voice of anguish!
Where each old poetic mountain
Inspiration breath'd around;
Ev'ry shade and hallow'd fountain
Murmur'd deep a solemn sound:
Till the sad Nine, in Greece's evil hour,
Left their Parnassus for the Latian plains.
Alike they scorn the pomp of tyrant Power,
And coward Vice, that revels in her chains. 80
When Latium had her lofty spirit lost,
They sought, O Albion! next thy sea-encircled coast.

III. 1

Far from the sun and summer-gale,
In thy green lap was Nature's Darling laid,
What time, where lucid Avon stray'd,
To him the mighty Mother did unveil
Her awful face: the dauntless Child
Stretch'd forth his little arms and smiled.
This pencil take (she said), whose colours clear
Richly paint the vernal year: 90
Thine too these golden keys, immortal Boy!
This can unlock the gates of Joy;
Of Horror that, and thrilling Fears,
Or ope the sacred source of sympathetic Tears.

III. 2

Nor second He, that rode sublime
Upon the seraph-wings of Ecstasy
The secrets of the Abyss to spy :

He pass'd the flaming bounds of Place and Time :
The living Throne, the sapphire-blaze,
100 Where Angels tremble while they gaze,
He saw ; but, blasted with excess of light,
Closed his eyes in endless night.
Behold, where Dryden's less presumptuous car,
Wide o'er the fields of Glory bear
Two coursers of ethereal race,
With necks in thunder cloth'd, and long-resounding
pace.

III. 3

Hark, his hands the lyre explore !
Bright-eyed Fancy, hovering o'er,
Scatters from her pictur'd urn
110 Thoughts that breathe and words that burn.
But ah ! 'tis heard no more—

O ! Lyre divine, what daring Spirit
Wakes thee now ? Tho' he inherit
Nor the pride, nor ample pinion,
That the Theban Eagle bear,
Sailing with supreme dominion
Thro' the azure deep of air :
Yet oft before his infant eyes would run
Such forms as glitter in the Muse's ray,
120 With orient hues, unborrow'd of the sun :
Yet shall he mount, and keep his distant way
Beyond the limits of a vulgar fate :
Beneath the Good how far—but far above the Great.

THOMAS GRAY, 1754

Ode to Evening

IF aught of oaten stop or pastoral song
May hope, chaste Eve, to soothe thy modest ear
Like thy own brawling springs,
Thy springs, and dying gales;

O Nymph reserved,—while now the bright-hair'd sun
Sits in yon western tent, whose cloudy skirts,
With brede ethereal wove,
O'erhang his wavy bed,

Now air is hush'd, save where the weak-eyed bat
With short shrill shriek flits by on leathern wing, 10
Or where the beetle winds
His small but sullen horn,

As oft he rises midst the twilight path,
Against the pilgrim borne in heedless hum,—
Now teach me, maid composed,
To breathe some soften'd strain

Whose numbers stealing through thy dark'ning vale,
May not unseemly with its stillness suit;
As musing slow I hail
Thy genial loved return. 20

For when thy folding-star arising shows
His paly circlet, at his warning lamp
The fragrant Hours, and Elves
Who slept in buds the day,

And many a Nymph who wreathes her brows with
sedge
And sheds the freshening dew, and lovelier still
The pensive Pleasures sweet,
Prepare thy shadowy car.

Then let me rove some wild and heathy scene ;
30 Or find some ruin midst its dreary dells,
 Whose walls more awful nod
 By thy religious gleams.

Or if chill blustering winds or driving rain
Prevent my willing feet, be mine the hut
 That, from the mountain's side,
 Views wilds and swelling floods,

And hamlets brown, and dim-discovered spires ;
And hears their simple bell ; and marks o'er all
 Thy dewy fingers draw
40 The gradual dusky veil.

While Spring shall pour his showers, as oft he wont,
And bathe thy breathing tresses, meekest Eve !
 While Summer loves to sport
 Beneath thy lingering light ;

While sallow Autumn fills thy lap with leaves ;
Or Winter, yelling through the troublous air,
 Affrights thy shrinking train,
 And rudely rends thy robes ;

So long, regardful of thy quiet rule,
50 Shall Fancy, Friendship, Science, smiling Peace,
 Thy gentlest influence own,
 And hymn thy favourite name !

WILLIAM COLLINS, 1747

The Passions

WHEN Music, heavenly maid, was young,
While yet in early Greece she sung,
The Passions oft, to hear her shell,
Throng'd around her magic cell
Exulting, trembling, raging, fainting,
Possest beyond the Muse's painting;
By turns they felt the glowing mind
Disturb'd, delighted, raised, refined:
'Till once, 'tis said, when all were fired,
Fill'd with fury, rapt, inspired,
From the supporting myrtles round
They snatch'd her instruments of sound,
And, as they oft had heard apart
Sweet lessons of her forceful art,
Each, for Madness ruled the hour,
Would prove his own expressive power.

10

First Fear his hand, its skill to try,
Amid the chords bewilder'd laid,
And back recoil'd, he knew not why,
E'en at the sound himself had made.

20

Next Anger rush'd; his eyes on fire,
In lightnings own'd his secret stings;
In one rude clash he struck the lyre
And swept with hurried hand the strings.

With woeful measures wan Despair—
Low sullen sounds his grief beguiled,
A solemn, strange, and mingled air,
'Twas sad by fits, by starts 'twas wild.

But thou, O Hope, with eyes so fair,
What was thy delighted measure?
Still it whisper'd promised pleasure

30

And bade the lovely scenes at distance hail !
Still would her touch the strain prolong ;
And from the rocks, the woods, the vale
She call'd on Echo still through all the song ;
And, where her sweetest theme she chose,
A soft responsive voice was heard at every close ;
And Hope enchanted smiled, and waved her golden
hair ;—

And longer had she sung :—but with a frown Revenge
impatient rose :
40 He threw his blood-stain'd sword in thunder down ;
And with a withering look
The war-denouncing trumpet took,
And blew a blast so loud and dread,
Were ne'er prophetic sounds so full of woe !
And ever and anon he beat
The doubling drum with furious heat ;
And, though sometimes, each dreary pause between,
Dejected Pity at his side
Her soul-subduing voice applied,
50 Yet still he kept his wild unalter'd mien,
While each strain'd ball of sight seemed bursting from
his head.

Thy numbers, Jealousy, to nought were fix'd :
Sad proof of thy distressful state !
Of differing themes the veering song was mix'd ;
And now it courted Love, now raving call'd on Hate.

With eyes up-raised, as one inspired,
Pale Melancholy sat retired ;
And from her wild sequester'd seat,
In notes by distance made more sweet,
60 Pour'd through the mellow horn her pensive soul :
And dashing soft from rocks around
Bubbling runnels join the sound ;

Through glades and glooms the mingled measure
stole,
Or, o'er some haunted stream, with fond delay,
Round an holy calm diffusing,
Love of peace, and lonely musing,
In hollow murmurs died away.

But O! how alter'd was its sprightlier tone
When Cheerfulness, a nymph of healthiest hue, 70
Her bow across her shoulder flung,
Her buskins gemm'd with morning dew,
Blew an inspiring air, that dale and thicket rung,
The hunter's call to Faun and Dryad known!
The oak-crowned Sisters and their chaste-eyed
Queen,
Satyrs and Sylvan Boys, were seen
Peeping from forth their alleys green:
Brown Exercise rejoiced to hear;
And Sport leap'd up, and seized his beechen
spear.

Last came Joy's ecstatic trial: 80
He, with viny crown advancing,
First to the lively pipe his hand addrest:
But soon he saw the brisk awakening viol,
Whose sweet entrancing voice he loved the best:
They would have thought who heard the strain
They saw, in Tempe's vale, her native maids
Amidst the festal-sounding shades,
To some unwearied minstrel dancing;
While, as his flying fingers kiss'd the strings,
Love framed with Mirth a gay fantastic round: 90
Loose were her tresses seen, her zone unbound;
And he, amidst his frolic play,
As if he would the charming air repay,
Shook thousand odours from his dewy wings.

O Music! sphere-descended maid,
 Friend of Pleasure, Wisdom's aid!
 Why, goddess, why, to us denied,
 Lay'st thou thy ancient lyre aside?
 As in that loved Athenian bower
 100 You learn'd an all-commanding power,
 Thy mimic soul, O nymph endeared!
 Can well recall what then it heard.
 Where is thy native simple heart
 Devote to Virtue, Fancy, Art?
 Arise, as in that elder time,
 Warm, energetic, chaste, sublime!
 Thy wonders, in that god-like age,
 Fill thy recording Sister's page;—
 'Tis said, and I believe the tale,
 110 Thy humblest reed could more prevail,
 Had more of strength, diviner rage,
 Than all which charms this laggard age,
 E'en all at once together found,
 Cecilia's mingled world of sound:—
 Oh, bid our vain endeavours cease:
 Revive the just designs of Greece:
 Return in all thy simple state!
 Confirm the tales her sons relate!

WILLIAM COLLINS, 1747

The Deserted Village

SWEET Auburn! loveliest village of the plain;
 Where health and plenty cheered the labouring
 swain,
 Where smiling spring its earliest visit paid,
 And parting summer's lingering blooms delayed:
 Dear lovely bowers of innocence and ease,
 Seats of my youth, when every sport could please,

How often have I loitered o'er thy green,
Where humble happiness endeared each scene !
How often have I paused on every charm,
The sheltered cot, the cultivated farm, 10
The never-failing brook, the busy mill,
The decent church that topt the neighbouring hill,
The hawthorn bush, with seats beneath the shade,
For talking age and whispering lovers made !
How often have I blest the coming day,
When toil remitting lent its turn to play,
And all the village train, from labour free,
Led up their sports beneath the spreading tree ;
While many a pastime circled in the shade, 20
The young contending as the old surveyed ;
And many a gambol frolicked o'er the ground,
And sleights of art and feats of strength went round.
And still, as each repeated pleasure tired,
Succeeding sports the mirthful band inspired ;
The dancing pair that simply sought renown,
By holding out, to tire each other down ;
The Swain mistrustless of his smutted face,
While secret laughter tittered round the place ;
The bashful virgin's side-long looks of love,
The matron's glance that would those looks reprove. 30
These were thy charms, sweet village ! sports like
these,

With sweet succession, taught even toil to please :
These round thy bowers their cheerful influence shed :
These were thy charms—but all these charms are fled.

Sweet smiling village, loveliest of the lawn,
Thy sports are fled, and all thy charms withdrawn ;
Amidst thy bowers the tyrant's hand is seen,
And desolation saddens all thy green :
One only master grasps the whole domain,
And half a tillage stints thy smiling plain. 40
No more thy glassy brook reflects the day,
But, choked with sedges, works its weedy way ;

Along thy glades, a solitary guest,
The hollow-sounding bittern guards its nest;
Amidst thy desert walks the lapwing flies,
And tires their echoes with unvaried cries;
Sunk are thy bowers in shapeless ruin all,
And the long grass o'ertops the mouldering wall;
And, trembling, shrinking from the spoiler's hand,
50 Far, far away thy children leave the land.

Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates, and men decay:
Princes and lords may flourish, or may fade;
A breath can make them, as a breath has made:
But a bold peasantry, their country's pride,
When once destroyed, can never be supplied.

A time there was, ere England's griefs began,
When every rood of ground maintained its man;
For him light labour spread her wholesome store,
60 Just gave what life required, but gave no more:
His best companions, innocence and health;
And his best riches, ignorance of wealth.

But times are altered; trade's unfeeling train
Usurp the land and disposses the swain;
Along the lawn, where scattered hamlets rose,
Unwieldy wealth and cumbrous pomp repose,
And every want to opulence allied,
And every pang that folly pays to pride.
Those gentle hours that plenty bade to bloom,
70 Those calm desires that asked but little room,
Those healthful sports that graced the peaceful scene,
Lived in each look, and brightened all the green;
These, far departing, seek a kinder shore,
And rural mirth and manners are no more.

Sweet Auburn! parent of the blissful hour,
Thy glades forlorn confess the tyrant's power.
Here, as I take my solitary rounds
Amidst thy tangling walks and ruined grounds,
And, many a year elapsed, return to view

Where once the cottage stood, the hawthorn grew,
Remembrance wakes with all her busy train,
Swells at my breast, and turns the past to pain.

80

In all my wanderings round this world of care,
In all my griefs—and GOD has given my share—
I still had hopes, my latest hours to crown,
Amidst these humble bowers to lay me down;
To husband out life's taper at the close,
And keep the flame from wasting by repose :
I still had hopes, for pride attends us still,
Amidst the swains to show my book-learned skill,
Around my fire an evening group to draw,
And tell of all I felt, and all I saw ;
And, as a hare whom hounds and horns pursue
Pants to the place from whence at first he flew,
I still had hopes, my long vexations past,
Here to return—and die at home at last.

90

O blest retirement, friend to life's decline,
Retreats from care, that never must be mine,
How happy he who crowns in shades like these
A youth of labour with an age of ease ;
Who quits a world where strong temptations try,
And, since 'tis hard to combat, learns to fly !
For him no wretches, born to work and weep,
Explore the mine, or tempt the dangerous deep ;
No surly porter stands in guilty state,
To spurn imploring famine from the gate ;
But on he moves to meet his latter end,
Angels around befriending virtue's friend ;
Bends to the grave with unperceived decay,
While resignation gently slopes the way ;
And, all his prospects brightening to the last,
His heaven commences ere the world be past !

100

110

Sweet was the sound, when oft at evening's close
Up yonder hill the village murmur rose.
There, as I past with careless steps and slow,
The mingling notes came softened from below ;

The swain responsive as the milk-maid sung,
The sober herd that lowed to meet their young,
The noisy geese that gabbled o'er the pool,
120 The playful children just let loose from school,
The watch-dog's voice that bayed the whispering wind,
And the loud laugh that spoke the vacant mind ;—
These all in sweet confusion sought the shade,
And filled each pause the nightingale had made.
But now the sounds of population fail,
No cheerful murmurs fluctuate in the gale,
No busy steps the grass-grown foot-way tread,
For all the bloomy flush of life is fled.
All but yon widowed, solitary thing,
130 That feebly bends beside the plashy spring :
She, wretched matron, forced in age, for bread,
To strip the brook with mantling cresses spread,
To pick her wintry faggot from the thorn,
To seek her nightly shed, and weep till morn ;
She only left of all the harmless train,
The sad historian of the pensive plain.

Near yonder copse, where once the garden smiled,
And still where many a garden-flower grows wild ;
There, where a few torn shrubs the place disclose,
140 The village preacher's modest mansion rose.
A man he was to all the country dear,
And passing rich with forty pounds a year ;
Remote from towns he ran his godly race,
Nor e'er had changed, nor wished to change, his
place ;
Unpractised he to fawn, or seek for power,
By doctrines fashioned to the varying hour ;
For other aims his heart had learned to prize,
More skilled to raise the wretched than to rise.
His house was known to all the vagrant train,
150 He chid their wanderings, but relieved their pain :
The long-remember'd beggar was his guest,
Whose beard descending swept his aged breast ;

The ruined spendthrift, now no longer proud,
Claimed kindred there, and had his claims allowed;
The broken soldier, kindly bade to stay,
Sat by his fire, and talked the night away,
Wept o'er his wounds or tales of sorrow done,
Shouldered his crutch, and showed how fields were
won.

Pleased with his guests, the good man learned to glow,
And quite forgot their vices in their woe; 160
Careless their merits or their faults to scan,
His pity gave ere charity began.

Thus to relieve the wretched was his pride,
And e'en his failings leaned to virtue's side;
But in his duty prompt at every call,
He watched and wept, he prayed and felt for all;
And, as a bird each fond endearment tries
To tempt its new-fledged offspring to the skies,
He tried each art, reproved each dull delay,
Allured to brighter worlds, and led the way. 170

Beside the bed where parting life was laid,
And sorrow, guilt, and pain, by turns dismayed,
The reverend champion stood. At his control
Despair and anguish fled the struggling soul;
Comfort came down the trembling wretch to raise,
And his last faltering accents whispered praise.
At church, with meek and unaffected grace,
His looks adorned the venerable place;
Truth from his lips prevailed with double sway,
And fools, who came to scoff, remained to pray. 180
The service past, around the pious man,
With steady zeal, each honest rustic ran;
E'en children followed with endearing wile,
And plucked his gown, to share the good man's smile.
His ready smile a parent's warmth expressed;
Their welfare pleased him, and their cares distressed:
To them his heart, his love, his griefs were given,
But all his serious thoughts had rest in heaven.

As some tall cliff that lifts its awful form,
190 Swells from the vale, and midway leaves the storm,
Though round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,
Eternal sunshine settles on its head.

Beside yon straggling fence that skirts the way,
With blossom'd furze unprofitably gay,
There, in his noisy mansion, skilled to rule,
The village master taught his little school.
A man severe he was, and stern to view;
I knew him well, and every truant knew:
Well had the boding tremblers learned to trace
200 The day's disasters in his morning face;
Full well they laughed with counterfeited glee
At all his jokes, for many a joke had he;
Full well the busy whisper circling round
Conveyed the dismal tidings when he frowned.
Yet he was kind, or, if severe in aught,
The love he bore to learning was in fault;
The village all declared how much he knew:
'Twas certain he could write, and cipher too;
Lands he could measure, terms and tides presage,
210 And e'en the story ran that he could gauge:
In arguing, too, the parson owned his skill;
For e'en though vanquished, he could argue still;
While words of learned length and thundering sound
Amazed the gazing rustics ranged around;
And still they gazed, and still the wonder grew,
That one small head could carry all he knew.

But past is all his fame. The very spot
Where many a time he triumphed is forgot.
Near yonder thorn, that lifts its head on high,
220 Where once the sign-post caught the passing eye,
Low lies that house where nut-brown draughts
inspired,

Where grey-beard mirth and smiling toil retired,
Where village statesmen talked with looks profound,
And news much older than their ale went round.

Imagination fondly stoops to trace
The parlour splendours of that festive place :
The white-washed wall, the nicely sanded floor,
The varnished clock that clicked behind the
door ;

The chest contrived a double debt to pay,
A bed by night, a chest of drawers by day ;
The pictures placed for ornament and use,
The twelve good rules, the royal game of goose ;
The hearth, except when winter chilled the day,
With aspen boughs and flowers and fennel gay ;
While broken tea-cups, wisely kept for show,
Ranged o'er the chimney, glistened in a row.

230

Vain transitory splendours ! could not all
Reprieve the tottering mansion from its fall ?
Obscure it sinks, nor shall it more impart
An hour's importance to the poor man's heart.

240

Thither no more the peasant shall repair
To sweet oblivion of his daily care ;
No more the farmer's news, the barber's tale,
No more the woodman's ballad shall prevail ;
No more the smith his dusky brow shall clear,
Relax his ponderous strength, and lean to hear ;
The host himself no longer shall be found
Careful to see the mantling bliss go round ;
Nor the coy maid, half willing to be prest,
Shall kiss the cup to pass it to the rest.

250

Yes ! let the rich deride, the proud disdain,
These simple blessings of the lowly train ;
To me more dear, congenial to my heart,
One native charm, than all the gloss of art ;
Spontaneous joys, where Nature has its play,
The soul adopts, and owns their first-born sway ;
Lightly they frolic o'er the vacant mind,
Unenvied, unmolested, unconfined.

But the long pomp, the midnight masquerade,
With all the freaks of wanton wealth arrayed,—

260

In these, ere triflers half their wish obtain,
The toiling pleasure sickens into pain ;
And e'en while fashion's brightest arts decoy,
The heart distrusting asks if this be joy.

Ye friends to truth, ye statesmen who survey
The rich man's joys increase, the poor's decay,
'Tis yours to judge, how wide the limits stand
Between a splendid and a happy land.
Proud swells the tide with loads of freighted ore,
270 And shouting Folly hails them from her shore ;
Hoards e'en beyond the miser's wish abound,
And rich men flock from all the world around.
Yet count our gains. This wealth is but a name
That leaves our useful products still the same.
Not so the loss. The man of wealth and pride
Takes up a space that many poor supplied ;
Space for his lake, his park's extended bounds,
Space for his horses, equipage, and hounds :
The robe that wraps his limbs in silken sloth
280 Has robbed the neighbouring fields of half their
growth ;
His seat, where solitary sports are seen,
Indignant spurns the cottage from the green :
Around the world each needful product flies,
For all the luxuries the world supplies ;
While thus the land adorned for pleasure all
In barren splendour feebly waits the fall.

.

Good Heaven ! what sorrows gloomed that parting
day,
That called them from their native walks away ;
When the poor exiles, every pleasure past,
290 Hung round the bowers, and fondly looked their
last,
And took a long farewell, and wished in vain
For seats like these beyond the western main,

And shuddering still to face the distant deep.
Returned and wept, and still returned to weep.
The good old sire the first prepared to go
To new-found worlds, and wept for others' woe;
But for himself, in conscious virtue brave,
He only wished for worlds beyond the grave.
His lovely daughter, lovelier in her tears,
The fond companion of his helpless years,
Silent went next, neglectful of her charms,
And left a lover's for her father's arms.

300

With louder plaints the mother spoke her woes,
And blest the cot where every pleasure rose,
And kissed her thoughtless babes with many a
tear,

And clasped them close, in sorrow doubly dear,
Whilst her fond husband strove to lend relief
In all the silent manliness of grief.

O luxury! thou curst by Heaven's decree,
How ill exchanged are things like these for thee!

310

How do thy potions, with insidious joy,
Diffuse their pleasure only to destroy!

Kingdoms by thee, to sickly greatness grown,
Boast of a florid vigour not their own.

At every draught more large and large they grow,
A bloated mass of rank unwieldy woe;
Till sapped their strength, and every part unsound,
Down, down they sink, and spread a ruin round.

Even now the devastation is begun,
And half the business of destruction done;
Even now, methinks, as pondering here I stand,
I see the rural virtues leave the land.

320

Down where yon anchoring vessel spreads the sail,
That idly waiting flaps with every gale,
Downward they move, a melancholy band,
Pass from the shore, and darken all the strand.
Contented toil, and hospitable care,
And kind connubial tenderness, are there;

And piety with wishes placed above,
 330 And steady loyalty, and faithful love.
 And thou, sweet Poetry, thou loveliest maid,
 Still first to fly where sensual joys invade;
 Unfit in these degenerate times of shame
 To catch the heart, or strike for honest fame;
 Dear charming nymph, neglected and decried,
 My shame in crowds, my solitary pride;
 Thou source of all my bliss, and all my woe,
 Thou found'st me poor at first, and keep'st me so;
 Thou guide by which the noble arts excel,
 340 Thou nurse of every virtue, fare thee well!
 Farewell, and O! where'er thy voice be tried,
 On Torno's cliffs, or Pambamarca's side,
 Whether where equinoctial fervours glow,
 Or winter wraps the polar world in snow.
 Still let thy voice, prevailing over time,
 Redress the rigours of the inclement clime;
 Aid slighted truth with thy persuasive strain;
 Teach erring man to spurn the rage of gain:
 Teach him, that states of native strength possesst,
 350 Though very poor, may still be very blest;
 That trade's proud empire hastes to swift decay,
 As ocean sweeps the laboured mole away;
 While self-dependent power can time defy,
 As rocks resist the billows and the sky.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH, 1770

From "Poetical Sketches"

To Spring

O THOU with dewy locks, who lookest down
 Through the clear windows of the morning, turn
 Thine angel eyes upon our western isle,
 Which in full choir hails thy approach, O Spring!

The hills tell each other, and the listening
Valleys hear; all our longing eyes are turned
Up to thy bright pavilions : issue forth,
And let thy holy feet visit our clime !

Come o'er the eastern hills, and let our winds
Kiss thy perfumed garments; let us taste
Thy morn and evening breath; scatter thy pearls
Upon our lovesick land that mourns for thee.

10

Oh, deck her forth with thy fair fingers; pour
Thy soft kisses on her bosom; and put
Thy golden crown upon her languished head,
Whose modest tresses were bound up for thee!

To Summer

O thou who passest through our valleys in
Thy strength, curb thy fierce steeds, allay the heat
That flames from their large nostrils! Thou,

O Summer,

Oft pitchedst here thy golden tent, and oft
Beneath our oaks hast slept, while we beheld
With joy thy ruddy limbs and flourishing hair.

20

Beneath our thickest shades we oft have heard
Thy voice, when Noon upon his fervid car
Rode o'er the deep of heaven. Beside our springs
Sit down, and in our mossy valleys, on
Some bank beside a river clear, throw thy
Silk draperies off, and rush into the stream!
Our valleys love the Summer in his pride.

Our bards are famed who strike the silver wire :
Our youth are bolder than the southern swains,
Our maidens fairer in the sprightly dance.
We lack not songs, nor instruments of joy,
Nor echoes sweet, nor waters clear as heaven,
Nor laurel wreaths against the sultry heat.

30

To Morning

O holy virgin, clad in purest white,
Unlock heaven's golden gates, and issue forth;
Awake the dawn that sleeps in heaven; let light
Rise from the chambers of the east, and bring
40 The honeyed dew that cometh on waking day.
O radiant Morning, salute the Sun
Roused like a huntsman to the chase, and with
Thy buskined feet appear upon our hills.

The Prince of Love

How sweet I roamed from field to field,
And tasted all the summer's pride,
Till I the Prince of Love beheld
Who in the sunny beams did glide.

He showed me lilies for my hair,
And blushing roses for my brow;
50 He led me through his gardens fair
Where all his golden pleasures grow.

With sweet May-dews my wings were wet,
And Phœbus fired my vocal rage;
He caught me in his silken net,
And shut me in his golden cage.

He loves to sit and hear me sing,
Then, laughing, sports and plays with me:
Then stretches out my golden wing,
And mocks my loss of liberty.

Despair

My silks and fine array,
My smiles and languished air,
By love are driven away;
And mournful lean Despair
Brings me yew to deck my grave:
Such end true lovers have.

60

His face is fair as heaven
When springing buds unfold;
Oh, why to him was't giv'n,
Whose heart is wintry cold?
His breast is love's all-worship'd tomb,
Where all love's pilgrims come.

70

Bring me an axe and spade,
Bring me a winding-sheet;
When I my grave have made
Let winds and tempests beat:
Then down I'll lie, as cold as clay.
True love doth pass away!

WILLIAM BLAKE, 1783

From "Songs of Innocence"

Introduction

PIPING down the valleys wild,
Piping songs of pleasant glee,
On a cloud I saw a child,
And he laughing said to me:

"Pipe a song about a Lamb!"
So I piped with merry cheer.
"Piper, pipe that song again!"
So I piped: he wept to hear.

10

“Drop thy pipe, thy happy pipe;
Sing thy songs of happy cheer”:
So I sang the same again,
While he wept with joy to hear.

“Piper, sit thee down and write
In a book, that all may read.”
So he vanished from my sight;
And I plucked a hollow reed,

20

And I made a rural pen,
And I stained the water clear,
And I wrote my happy songs
Every child may joy to hear.

A Cradle Song

Sweet dreams, form a shade
O'er my lovely infant's head!
Sweet dreams of pleasant streams
By happy, silent, moony beams!

Sweet Sleep, with soft down
Weave thy brows an infant crown!
Sweet Sleep, angel mild,
Hover o'er my happy child!

30

Sweet smiles, in the night
Hover over my delight!
Sweet smiles, mother's smile,
All the livelong night beguile.

Sweet moans, dovelike sighs,
Chase not slumber from thine eyes!
Sweet moan, sweeter smile,
All the dovelike moans beguile.

Sleep, sleep, happy child!
All creation slept and smiled.
Sleep, sleep, happy sleep,
While o'er thee doth mother weep.

40

Sweet babe, in thy face
Holy image I can trace;
Sweet babe, once like thee
Thy Maker lay, and wept for me:

Wept for me, for thee, for all,
When He was an infant small.
Thou his image ever see,
Heavenly face that smiles on thee!

Smiles on thee, on me, on all,
Who became an infant small;
Infant smiles are his own smiles;
Heaven and earth to peace beguiles.

50

A Dream

Once a dream did weave a shade
O'er my angel-guarded bed,
That an emmet lost its way
Where on grass methought I lay.

Troubled, wildered, and forlorn,
Dark, benighted, travel-worn,
Over many a tangled spray,
All heart-broke, I heard her say:

60

"Oh, my children! do they cry,
Do they hear their father sigh?
Now they look abroad to see,
Now return and weep for me."

Pitying, I dropped a tear :
But I saw a glow-worm near,
Who replied : "What wailing wight
Calls the watchman of the night ?

70 "I am set to light the ground,
While the beetle goes his round :
Follow now the beetle's hum ;
Little wanderer, hie thee home."

WILLIAM BLAKE, 1789

From "Songs of Experience"

Introduction

HEAR the voice of the Bard,
Who present, past, and future, sees ;
Whose ears have heard
The Holy Word
That walked among the ancient trees,

Calling the lapsed soul,
And weeping in the evening dew ;
That might control
The starry pole,
10 And fallen, fallen light renew !

"O Earth, O Earth, return !
Arise from out the dewy grass !
Night is worn,
And the morn
Rises from the slumberous mass.

“Turn away no more ;
Why wilt thou turn away ?
The starry floor,
The watery shore,
Are giv’n thee till the break of day.”

20

The Tiger

Tiger, Tiger, burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Could frame thy fearful symmetry ?

In what distant deeps or skies
Burnt the fire of thine eyes ?
On what wings dare he aspire ?
What the hand dare seize the fire ?

And what shoulder and what art
Could twist the sinews of thy heart ?
And, when thy heart began to beat,
What dread hand and what dread feet ?

30

What the hammer ? what the chain ?
In what furnace was thy brain ?
What the anvil ? what dread grasp
Dare its deadly terrors clasp ?

When the stars threw down their spears,
And watered heaven with their tears,
Did he smile his work to see ?
Did he who made the lamb make thee ?

40

Tiger, Tiger, burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry ?

The Angel

I dreamt a dream! what can it mean?
And that I was a maiden Queen
Guarded by an Angel mild:
Witless woe was ne'er beguiled!

50 And I wept both night and day,
And he wiped my tears away;
And I wept both day and night,
And hid from him my heart's delight.

So he took his wings and fled;
Then the morn blushed rosy red.
I dried my tears, and armed my fears
With ten-thousand shields and spears.

60 Soon my Angel came again;
I was arm'd, he came in vain;
For the time of youth was fled,
And grey hairs were on my head.

WILLIAM BLAKE, 1794

To a Mouse

ON TURNING HER UP IN HER NEST WITH
THE PLOUGH, NOVEMBER 1785

WEE, sleekit, cowerin, tim'rous beastie,
O, what a panic's in thy breastie!
Thou need na start awa sae hasty,
Wi' bickering brattle!
I wad be laith to rin an' chase thee,
Wi' murd'ring pattle!

I'm truly sorry man's dominion
Has broken nature's social union,
An' justifies that ill opinion,
Which makes thee startle 10
At me, thy poor, earth-born companion,
An' fellow mortal!

I doubt na, whiles, but thou may thief;
What then? poor beastie, thou maun live!
A daimen icker in a thrave
'S a sma' request;
I'll get a blessin wi' the lave,
And never miss't!

Thy wee bit housie, too, in ruin!
Its silly wa's the win's are strewin! 20
An' naething, now, to big a new ane,
O' foggage green!
An' bleak December's winds ensuin,
Baith snell an' keen!

Thou saw the fields laid bare an' waste,
An' weary winter comin fast,
An' cozie here, beneath the blast,
Thou thought to dwell,
Till crash! the cruel coulter past
Out thro' thy cell. 30

That wee bit heap o' leaves an' stibble
Has cost thee mony a weary nibble!
Now thou's turn'd out, for a' thy trouble,
But house or hald,
To thole the winter's sleety dribble,
An' cranreuch cauld

But Mousie, thou art no thy lane
In proving foresight may be vain;
The best-laid schemes o' mice an' men
Gang aft agley,
An' lea'e us nought but grief an' pain,
For promis'd joy!

Still thou art blest, compar'd wi' me!
The present only toucheth thee:
But och! I backward cast my e'e
On prospects drear!
An' forward, tho' I canna see,
I guess an' fear!

ROBERT BURNS, 1786

The Banks o' Doon

YE flowery banks o' bonie Doon,
How can ye blume sae fair?
How can ye chant, ye little birds,
And I sae fu' o' care!

Thou'll break my heart, thou bonie bird,
That sings upon the bough !
Thou minds me o' the happy days
When my fause Luvè was true.

Thou'll break my heart, thou bonie bird,
That sings beside thy mate;
For sae I sat, and sae I sang,
And wist na o' my fate.

Aft hae I rov'd by bonie Doon,
To see the woodbine twine ;
And ilka bird sang o' its Luve,
And sae did I o' mine.

Wi' lightsome heart I pu'd a rose,
Upon its thorny tree;
And my fause Luvver staw my rose,
And left the thorn wi' me.

20

ROBERT BURNS, 1787

Farewell to Nancy

A E fond kiss, and then we sever;
Ae fareweel, and then for ever!
Deep in heart-wrung tears I'll pledge thee,
Warring sighs and groans I'll wage thee.
Who shall say that Fortune grieves him,
While the star of hope she leaves him?
Me, nae cheerful twinkle lights me;
Dark despair around benights me.

I'll ne'er blame my partial fancy,
Naething could resist my Nancy:
But to see her was to love her,
Love but her, and love for ever.
Had we never lov'd sae kindly,
Had we never lov'd sae blindly,
Never met—or never parted,
We had ne'er been broken-hearted.

10

Fare-thee-weel, thou first and fairest!
Fare-thee-weel, thou best and dearest!
Thine be ilka joy and treasure,
Peace, Enjoyment, Love and Pleasure.
Ae fond kiss, and then we sever!
Ae fareweel, alas, for ever!
Deep in heart-wrung tears I'll pledge thee,
Warring sighs and groans I'll wage thee.

20

ROBERT BURNS, 1791

A Red, Red Rose

O MY Luve is like a red, red rose,
That's newly sprung in June :
O my Luve's like the melodie,
That's sweetly play'd in tune.

As fair art thou, my bonie lass,
So deep in luve am I ;
And I will luve thee still, my dear,
Till a' the seas gang dry.

10 Till a' the seas gang dry, my dear,
And the rocks melt wi' the sun ;
I will luve thee still, my dear,
While the sands o' life shall run.

And fare-thee-weel, my only Luve !
And fare-thee-weel a while !
And I will come again, my Luve,
Tho' 't were ten thousand mile !

ROBERT BURNS, 1792

• Bannockburn

Bruce's Address to his Army

SCOTS, wha hae wi' WALLACE bled,
Scots, wham BRUCE has aften led,
Welcome to your gory bed,
Or to Victorie !

Now's the day, and now's the hour ;
See the front o' battle lour ;
See approach proud EDWARD'S power—
Chains and Slaverie !

Wha will be a traitor knave?
Wha can fill a coward's grave?
Wha sae base as be a Slave?

10

Let him turn and flee!

Wha, for Scotland's King and Law,
Freedom's sword will strongly draw,
FREE-MAN stand, or FREE-MAN fa'?

Let him follow me!

By Oppression's woes and pains!
By your Sons in servile chains!
We will drain our dearest veins,

But they shall be free!

20

Lay the proud Usurpers low!
Tyrants fall in every foe!
LIBERTY'S in every blow!—

Let us Do or Die!

ROBERT BURNS, 1793

For a' that and a' that

IS there for honest Poverty,
That hangs his head, and a' that?
The coward slave—we pass him by,
We dare be poor for a' that!

For a' that, and a' that,
Our toils obscure and a' that,
The rank is but the guinea's stamp,
The Man's the gowd for a' that.

What though on hamely fare we dine,
Wear hoddin grey, an' a' that;
Gie fools their silks, and knaves their wine,
A Man's a Man for a' that.

10

For a' that, an' a' that,
Their tinsel show, an' a' that;
The honest man, tho' e'er sae poor,
Is king o' men for a' that.

20 Ye see yon birkie, ca'd a lord,
 Wha struts, an' stares, an' a' that;
 Tho' hundreds worship at his word,
 He's but a coof for a' that:
 For a' that, an' a' that,
 His ribband, star, an' a' that:
 The man o' independent mind
 He looks and laughs at a' that.

A prince can mak a belted knight,
 A marquis, duke, an' a' that;
 But an honest man's aboon his might,
 Gude faith, he maunna fa' that!
 30 For a' that, an' a' that,
 Their dignities an' a' that,
 The pith o' sense, and pride o' worth,
 Are higher rank than a' that.

Then let us pray that come it may,
 (As come it will for a' that,)
 That Sense and Worth, o'er a' the earth,
 May bear the gree, an' a' that.
 For a' that, and a' that,
 It's coming yet for a' that,
 That Man to Man, the world o'er,
 40 Shall brothers be for a' that.

ROBERT BURNS, 1795

GLOSSARY

ae, one.

agley, askew, out of plumb.

bickering brattle, scurrying flight.

big, to build.

birkie, a lively fellow.

but, without.

coof, a fool, a dolt.

cranreuch, hoar-frost.

daimen icker, an ear of corn.

foggage, moss.

gang aft agley, often go amiss.

gowd, gold.

gree, a prize.

hald, a dwelling-place.

hoddin grey, coarse cloth of undyed wool.

ilka, every.

lane (*thy lane*), alone.

lave, what is left.

maun, must.

pattle, a small spade.

sleekit, sleek.

snell, bitter, biting.

stibble, stubble.

thole, to suffer, to endure.

thrive, a bundle of sheaves of corn.

From "The Task"

A Rural Landscape

HOW oft upon yon eminence our pace
Has slacken'd to a pause, and we have borne
The ruffling wind, scarce conscious that it blew,
While Admiration feeding at the eye,
And still unsated, dwelt upon the scene.
Thence with what pleasure have we just discern'd
The distant plough slow moving, and beside
His labo'ring team, that swerv'd not from the track,
The sturdy swain diminish'd to a boy!
Here Ouse, slow winding through a level plain 10
Of spacious meads with cattle sprinkled o'er,
Conducts the eye along his sinuous course
Delighted. There, fast rooted in their bank,
Stand, never overlook'd, our favourite elms,
That screen the herdsman's solitary hut;
While far beyond and overthwart the stream,
That as with molten glass inlays the vale,
The sloping land recedes into the clouds,
Displaying on its varied side the grace
Of hedge-row beauties numberless, square tow'r, 20
Tall spire, from which the sound of cheerful bells
Just undulates upon the list'ning ear,
Groves, heaths, and smoking villages, remote.
Scenes must be beautiful which, daily view'd,
Please daily, and whose novelty survives
Long knowledge and the scrutiny of years,
Praise justly due to those that I describe.

The Poet dislikes Town-life

God made the country, and man made the town.
What wonder then that health and virtue, gifts,
That can alone make sweet the bitter draught,

30

That life holds out to all, should most abound
And least be threaten'd in the fields and groves?
Possess ye therefore, ye who, borne about
In chariots and sedans, know no fatigue
But that of idleness, and taste no scenes
But such as art contrives, possess ye still
Your element; there only can ye shine;
There only minds like yours can do no harm.
Our groves were planted to console at noon
40 The pensive wand'rer in their shades. At eve
The moon-beam, sliding softly in between
The sleeping leaves, is all the light they wish,
Birds warbling all the music. We can spare
The splendour of your lamps; they but eclipse
Our softer satellite. Your songs confound
Our more harmonious notes: the thrush departs
Scar'd, and th' offended nightingale is mute.
There is a public mischief in your mirth;
It plagues your country. Folly such as yours,
50 Grac'd with a sword, and worthier of a fan,
Has made, which enemies could ne'er have done,
Our arch of empire, stedfast but for you,
A mutilated structure, soon to fall.

Man's Inhumanity to Man

O for a lodge in some vast wilderness,
Some boundless contiguity of shade,
Where rumour of oppression and deceit,
Of unsuccessful or successful war,
Might never reach me more! My ear is pain'd,
My soul is sick with ev'ry day's report
60 Of wrong and outrage, with which Earth is fill'd.
There is no flesh in man's obdurate heart,
It does not feel for man; the natural bond
Of brotherhood is sever'd as the flax,
That falls asunder at the touch of fire.

He finds his fellow guilty of a skin
 Not colour'd like his own; and having pow'r
 T' enforce the wrong, for such a worthy cause
 Dooms and devotes him as a lawful prey.
 Lands intersected by a narrow frith
 Abhor each other. Mountains interpos'd 70
 Make enemies of nations, who had else
 Like kindred drops been mingled into one.
 Thus man devotes his brother, and destroys;
 And, worse than all, and most to be deplor'd
 As human nature's broadest, foulest blot,
 Chains him, and tasks him, and exacts his sweat
 With stripes, that Mercy with a bleeding heart
 Weeps, when she sees inflicted on a beast.
 Then what is man? And what man, seeing this,
 And having human feelings, does not blush, 80
 And hang his head, to think himself a man?
 I would not have a slave to till my ground,
 To carry me, to fan me while I sleep,
 And tremble when I wake, for all the wealth,
 That sinews bought and sold have ever earn'd.
 No: dear as freedom is, and in my heart's
 Just estimation priz'd above all price,
 I had much rather be myself the slave,
 And wear the bonds, than fasten them on him.
 We have no slaves at home—Then why abroad? 90
 And they themselves once ferried o'er the wave
 That parts us, are emancipate and loos'd.
 Slaves cannot breathe in England: if their lungs
 Receive our air, that moment they are free;
 They touch our country, and their shackles fall.
 That's noble, and bespeaks a nation proud
 And jealous of the blessing. Spread it then,
 And let it circulate through ev'ry vein
 Of all your empire; that where Britain's pow'r
 Is felt, mankind may feel her mercy too. 100

A Patriotic Reflection

England, with all thy faults, I love thee still—
My country! and, while yet a nook is left,
Where English minds and manners may be found,
Shall be constrain'd to love thee. Though thy clime
Be fickle, and thy year most part deform'd
With dripping rains, or wither'd by a frost,
I would not yet exchange thy sullen skies,
And fields without a flow'r, for warmer France
With all her vines; nor for Ausonia's groves
110 Of golden fruitage, and her myrtle bow'rs.
To shake thy senate, and from heights sublime
Of patriot eloquence to flash down fire
Upon thy foes, was never meant my task:
But I can feel thy fortunes, and partake
Thy joys and sorrows, with as true a heart
As any thund'rer there. And I can feel
Thy follies too; and with a just disdain
Frown at effeminates, whose very looks
Reflect dishonour on the land I love.
120 How, in the name of soldiership and sense,
Should England prosper, when such things, as
 smooth
And tender as a girl, all essenc'd o'er
With odours, and as profligate as sweet;
Who sell their laurel for a myrtle wreath,
And love when they should fight; when such as
 these
Presume to lay their hand upon the ark
Of her magnificent and awful cause?
Time was when it was praise and boast enough
In ev'ry clime, and travel where we might,
130 That we were born her children. Praise enough
To fill th' ambition of a private man,
That Chatham's language was his mother tongue,
And Wolfe's great name compatriot with his own.

The Freeman

He is the freeman, whom the truth makes free,
And all are slaves beside. There's not a chain,
That hellish foes, confed'rate for his harm,
Can wind around him, but he casts it off,
With as much ease as Samson his green withes.
He looks abroad into the varied field

Of nature, and though poor perhaps, compar'd
With those whose mansions glitter in his sight,
Calls the delightful scen'ry all his own.

140

His are the mountains, and the valleys his,
And the resplendent rivers. His t' enjoy
With a propriety that none can feel,
But who with filial confidence inspir'd
Can lift to Heav'n an unpresumptuous eye,
And smiling say—"My Father made them all!"

Are they not his by a peculiar right,

And by an emphasis of int'rest his,

150

Whose eye they fill with tears of holy joy,
Whose heart with praise, and whose exalted mind
With worthy thoughts of that unwearied love,
That plann'd, and built, and still upholds, a world
So cloth'd with beauty for rebellious man?

Yes—ye may fill your garner, ye that reap
The loaded soil, and ye may waste much good
In senseless riot; but ye will not find

In feast, or in the chase, in song or dance,

A liberty like his, who unimpeach'd

160

Of usurpation, and to no man's wrong,
Appropriates nature as his Father's work,
And has a richer use of yours than you.

He is indeed a freeman. Free by birth
Of no mean city; plann'd or ere the hills
Were built, the fountains open'd, or the sea
With all his roaring multitude of waves.

His freedom is the same in ev'ry state;

And no condition of this changeful life,
170 So manifold in cares, whose ev'ry day
Brings its own evil with it, makes it less :
For he has wings, that neither sickness, pain,
Nor penury, can cripple or confine.
No nook so narrow but he spreads them there
With ease, and is at large. Th' oppressor holds
His body bound ; but knows not what a range
His spirit takes, unconscious of a chain ;
And that to bind him is a vain attempt
Whom God delights in, and in whom he dwells.

The Spirit of Nature

180 All we behold is miracle ; but, seen
So duly, all is miracle in vain.
Where now the vital energy, that mov'd,
While summer was, the pure and subtle lymph
Through th' imperceptible meand'ring veins
Of leaf and flow'r ? It sleeps ; and the icy touch
Of unprolific winter has impress'd
A cold stagnation on th' intestine tide.
But let the months go round, a few short months,
And all shall be restor'd. These naked shoots,
190 Barren as lances, among which the wind
Makes wintry music, sighing as it goes,
Shall put their graceful foliage on again,
And more aspiring, and with ampler spread,
Shall boast new charms, and more than they have lost.
Then each, in its peculiar honours clad,
Shall publish even to the distant eye
Its family and tribe. Laburnum, rich
In streaming gold ; syringa, iv'ry pure ;
The scentless and the scented rose ; this red,
200 And of an humbler growth, the other tall,
And throwing up into the darkest gloom
Of neighb'ring cypress, or more sable yew,

Her silver globes, light as the foamy surf,
 That the wind severs from the broken wave;
 The lilac, various in array, now white,
 Now sanguine, and her beauteous head now set
 With purple spikes pyramidal, as if,
 Studious of ornament, yet unresolv'd
 Which hue she most approv'd, she chose them all;
 Copious of flow'rs the woodbine, pale and wan, 210
 But well compensating her sickly looks
 With never-cloying odours, early and late;
 Hypericum all bloom, so thick a swarm
 Of flow'rs, like flies clothing her slender rods,
 That scarce a leaf appears : mezereon too,
 Though leafless, well attir'd, and thick beset
 With blushing wreaths, investing ev'ry spray;
 Althæa with the purple eye; the broom,
 Yellow and bright, as bullion unalloy'd,
 Her blossoms; and luxuriant above all, 220
 The jasmine, throwing wide her elegant sweets,
 The deep dark green of whose unvarnish'd leaf
 Makes more conspicuous, and illumines more
 The bright profusion of her scatter'd stars.—
 These have been, and these shall be in their day :
 And all this uniform uncolour'd scene
 Shall be dismantled of its fleecy load,
 And flush into variety again.
 From dearth to plenty, and from death to life,
 Is Nature's progress, when she lectures man 230
 In heav'nly truth : evincing, as she makes
 The grand transition, that there lives and works
 A soul in all things, and that soul is God.
 The beauties of the wilderness are his,
 That make so gay the solitary place,
 Where no eye sees them. And the fairer forms,
 That cultivation glories in, are his.
 He sets the bright procession on its way,
 And marshals all the order of the year ;

240 He marks the bounds, which Winter may not pass,
And blunts his pointed fury; in its case,
Russet and rude, folds up the tender germe,
Uninjur'd, with inimitable art;
And ere one flow'ry season fades and dies
Designs the blooming wonders of the next.

Winter

O Winter, ruler of th' inverted year,
Thy scatter'd hair with sleet like ashes fill'd,
Thy breath congeal'd upon thy lips, thy cheeks
Fring'd with a beard made white with other snows
250 Than those of age, thy forehead wrapp'd in clouds,
A leafless branch thy sceptre, and thy throne
A sliding car, indebted to no wheels,
But urg'd by storms along its slipp'ry way,
I love thee, all unlovely as thou seem'st,
And dreaded as thou art! Thou hold'st the sun
A pris'ner in the yet undawning east,
Shortening his journey between morn and noon,
And hurrying him, impatient of his stay,
Down to the rosy west; but kindly still
260 Compensating his loss with added hours
Of social converse and instructive ease,
And gath'ring, at short notice, in one group
The family dispers'd, and fixing thought,
Not less dispers'd by daylight and its cares.
I crown thee king of intimate delights,
Fireside enjoyments, homeborn happiness,
And all the comforts, that the lowly roof
Of undisturb'd Retirement, and the hours
Of long uninterrupted ev'ning, know.

270 Come Ev'ning, once again, season of peace;
Return, sweet Ev'ning, and continue long!

Methinks I see thee in the streaky west,
With matron step slow moving, while the night
Treads on thy sweeping train; one hand employ'd
In letting fall the curtain of repose
On bird and beast; the other charg'd for man
With sweet oblivion of the cares of day :
Not sumptuously adorn'd, nor needing aid,
Like homely-featur'd Night, of clust'ring gems;
A star or two, just twinkling on thy brow,
Suffices thee; save that the moon is thine
No less than hers, not worn indeed on high
With ostentatious pageantry, but set
With modest grandeur in thy purple zone,
Resplendent less, but of an ampler round.
Come then, and thou shalt find thy vot'ry calm,
Or make me so. Composure is thy gift.

280

The night was winter in his roughest mood;
The morning sharp and clear. But now at noon
Upon the southern side of the slant hills,
And where the woods fence off the northern blast,
The season smiles, resigning all its rage,
And has the warmth of May. The vault is blue
Without a cloud, and white without a speck
The dazzling splendour of the scene below.
Again the harmony comes o'er the vale;
And through the trees I view th' embattled tow'r
Whence all the music. I again perceive
The soothing influence of the wafted strains,
And settle in soft musings as I tread
The walk, still verdant, under oaks and elms,
Whose outspread branches over-arch the glade.
The roof, though moveable through all its length
As the wind sways it, has yet well suffic'd,
And, intercepting in their silent fall
The frequent flakes, has kept a path for me.

290

300

No noise is here, or none that hinders thought.
The redbreast warbles still, but is content
With slender notes, and more than half suppress'd :
310 Pleas'd with his solitude, and flitting light
From spray to spray, where'er he rests he shakes
From many a twig the pendent drops of ice,
That tinkle in the wither'd leaves below.
Stillness, accompanied with sounds so soft,
Charms more than silence. Meditation here
May think down hours to moments. Here the heart
May give a useful lesson to the head,
And Learning wiser grow without his books.
Knowledge and Wisdom, far from being one,
320 Have ofttimes no connexion. Knowledge dwells
In heads replete with thoughts of other men ;
Wisdom in minds attentive to their own.
Knowledge, a rude unprofitable mass,
The mere materials with which Wisdom builds,
Till smooth'd, and squar'd, and fitted to its place,
Does but encumber whom it seems t' enrich.
Knowledge is proud that he has learned so much ;
Wisdom is humble that he knows no more.

WILLIAM COWPER, 1785

Kubla Khan

IN Xanadu did Kubla Khan
A stately pleasure-dome decree :
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran
Through caverns measureless to man
Down to a sunless sea.
So twice five miles of fertile ground
With walls and towers were girdled round :
And here were gardens bright with sinuous rills,
Where blossomed many an incense-bearing tree ;
10 And here were forests ancient as the hills,
Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.

But oh! that deep romantic chasm which slanted
Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover!
A savage place! as holy and enchanted
As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted
By woman wailing for her demon-lover!
And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil seething,
As if this earth in fast thick pants were breathing,
A mighty fountain momentarily was forced:
Amid whose swift half-intermitted burst 20
Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail,
Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's flail:
And 'mid these dancing rocks at once and ever
It flung up momentarily the sacred river.
Five miles meandering with a mazy motion
Through wood and dale the sacred river ran,
Then reached the caverns measureless to man,
And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean:
And 'mid this tumult Kubla heard from far
Ancestral voices prophesying war! 30

The shadow of the dome of pleasure
Floated midway on the waves;
Where was heard the mingled measure
From the fountain and the caves.
It was a miracle of rare device,
A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice!

A damsel with a dulcimer
In a vision once I saw:
It was an Abyssinian maid,
And on her dulcimer she played, 40
Singing of Mount Abora.
Could I revive within me
Her symphony and song,
To such a deep delight 'twould win me,
That with music loud and long
I would build that dome in air,

That sunny dome! those caves of ice!
And all who heard should see them there,
And all should cry, Beware! Beware!
50 His flashing eyes, his floating hair!
Weave a circle round him thrice,
And close your eyes with holy dread,
For he on honey-dew hath fed,
And drunk the milk of Paradise.

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE, 1797

Christabel

Part I

'TIS the middle of night by the castle clock,
And the owls have awakened the crowing cock;
Tu—whit!——Tu—whoo!
And hark, again! the crowing cock,
How drowsily it crew.

Sir Leoline, the Baron rich,
Hath a toothless mastiff, which
From her kennel beneath the rock
She maketh answer to the clock,
10 Four for the quarters, and twelve for the hour;
Ever and aye, by shine and shower,
Sixteen short howls, not over loud;
Some say, she sees my lady's shroud.

Is the night chilly and dark?
The night is chilly, but not dark.
The thin gray cloud is spread on high,
It covers but not hides the sky.
The moon is behind, and at the full;
And yet she looks both small and dull.
20 The night is chill, the cloud is gray:
'Tis a month before the month of May.
And the Spring comes slowly up this way.

The lovely lady, Christabel,
Whom her father loves so well,
What makes her in the wood so late,
A furlong from the castle gate?
She had dreams all yesternight
Of her own betrothed knight;
And she in the midnight wood will pray
For the weal of her lover that's far away.

30

She stole along, she nothing spoke,
The sighs she heaved were soft and low,
And naught was green upon the oak
But moss and rarest mistletoe:
She kneels beneath the huge oak tree,
And in silence prayeth she.

The lady sprang up suddenly,
The lovely lady, Christabel!
It moaned as near, as near can be,
But what it is she cannot tell.—
On the other side it seems to be,
Of the huge, broad-breasted, old oak tree.

40

The night is chill; the forest bare;
Is it the wind that moaneth bleak?
There is not wind enough in the air
To move away the ringlet curl
From the lovely lady's cheek—
There is not wind enough to twirl
The one red leaf, the last of its clan,
That dances as often as dance it can,
Hanging so light, and hanging so high,
On the topmost twig that looks up at the sky.

50

Hush, beating heart of Christabel!
Jesu, Maria, shield her well!
She folded her arms beneath her cloak,
And stole to the other side of the oak.
What sees she there?

There she sees a damsel bright,
Drest in a silken robe of white,
60 That shadowy in the moonlight shone :
The neck that made that white robe wan,
Her stately neck, and arms were bare ;
Her blue-veined feet unsandal'd were,
And wildly glittered here and there
The gems entangled in her hair.
I guess, 'twas frightful there to see
A lady so richly clad as she—
Beautiful exceedingly.

Mary mother, save me now !
70 (Said Christabel) And who art thou ?
The lady strange made answer meet,
And her voice was faint and sweet :—
Have pity on my sore distress,
I scarce can speak for weariness :
Stretch forth thy hand and have no fear !
Said Christabel, How camest thou here ?
And the lady, whose voice was faint and sweet,
Did thus pursue her answer meet :—

My sire is of a noble line,
80 And my name is Geraldine :
Five warriors seized me yestermorn,
Me, even me, a maid forlorn :
They choked my cries with force and fright,
And tied me on a palfrey white.
The palfrey was as fleet as wind,
And they rode furiously behind.
They spurred amain, their steeds were white :
And once we crossed the shade of night.
As sure as Heaven shall rescue me,
90 I have no thought what men they be ;
Nor do I know how long it is
(For I have lain entranced I wis)

Since one, the tallest of the five,
Took me from the palfrey's back,
A weary woman, scarce alive.
Some muttered words his comrades spoke;
He placed me underneath this oak;
He swore they would return with haste;
Whither they went I cannot tell—
I thought I heard, some minutes past,
Sounds as of a castle bell.

100

Stretch forth thy hand (thus ended she),
And help a wretched maid to flee.

Then Christabel stretched forth her hand,
And comforted fair Geraldine :
O, well, bright dame ! may you command
The service of Sir Leoline ;
And gladly our stout chivalry
Will he send forth and friends withal
To guide and guard you safe and free
Home to your noble father's hall.

110

She rose : and forth with steps they passed
That strove to be, and were not, fast.
Her gracious stars the lady blest,
And thus spake on sweet Christabel :
All our household are at rest,
The hall as silent as the cell ;
Sir Leoline is weak in health,
And may not well awakened be,
But we will move as if in stealth,
And I beseech your courtesy,
This night, to share your couch with me.

120

They crossed the moat, and Christabel
Took the key that fitted well ;
A little door she opened straight,
All in the middle of the gate ;

The gate that was ironed within and without,
Where an army in battle array had marched out.
The lady sank, belike through pain,
130 And Christabel with might and main
Lifted her up, a weary weight,
Over the threshold of the gate :
Then the lady rose again,
And moved, as she were not in pain.

So free from danger, free from fear,
They crossed the court : right glad they were.
And Christabel devoutly cried
To the lady by her side,
Praise we the Virgin all divine
140 Who hath rescued thee from thy distress !
Alas, alas ! said Geraldine,
I cannot speak for weariness.
So free from danger, free from fear,
They crossed the court : right glad they were.

Outside her kennel, the mastiff old
Lay fast asleep, in moonshine cold.
The mastiff old did not awake,
Yet she an angry moan did make !
And what can ail the mastiff bitch ?
150 Never till now she uttered yell
Beneath the eye of Christabel.
Perhaps it is the owlet's scritch :
For what can ail the mastiff bitch ?

They passed the hall, that echoes still,
Pass as lightly as you will !
The brands were flat, the brands were dying,
Amid their own white ashes lying ;
But when the lady passed, there came
A tongue of light, a fit of flame ;
160 And Christabel saw the lady's eye,

And nothing else saw she thereby,
Save the boss of the shield of Sir Leoline tall,
Which hung in a murky old niche in the wall.
O, softly tread, said Christabel,
My father seldom sleepeth well.

Sweet Christabel her feet doth bare,
And jealous of the listening air
They steal their way from stair to stair,
Now in glimmer, and now in gloom,
And now they pass the Baron's room,
As still as death, with stifled breath !
And now have reached her chamber door ;
And now doth Geraldine press down
The rushes of the chamber floor.

170

The moon shines dim in the open air,
And not a moonbeam enters here.
But they without its light can see
The chamber carved so curiously,
Carved with figures strange and sweet,
All made out of the carver's brain,
For a lady's chamber meet :
The lamp with twofold silver chain
Is fastened to an angel's feet.

180

The silver lamp burns dead and dim ;
But Christabel the lamp will trim.
She trimmed the lamp, and made it bright,
And left it swinging to and fro,
While Geraldine, in wretched plight,
Sank down upon the floor below.

O weary lady, Geraldine,
I pray you, drink this cordial wine !
It is a wine of virtuous powers ;
My mother made it of wild flowers.

190

200

And will your mother pity me,
Who am a maiden most forlorn?
Christabel answered—Woe is me!
She died the hour that I was born.
I have heard the grey-haired friar tell
How on her death-bed she did say,
That she should hear the castle-bell
Strike twelve upon my wedding-day.
O mother dear! that thou wert here!
I would, said Geraldine, she were!

210

But soon with altered voice, said she—
“Off, wandering mother! Peak and pine!
I have power to bid thee flee.”
Alas! what ails poor Geraldine?
Why stares she with unsettled eye?
Can she the bodiless dead espy?
And why with hollow voice cries she,
“Off, woman, off! this hour is mine—
Though thou her guardian spirit be,
Off, woman, off! ’tis given to me.”

220

Then Christabel knelt by the lady’s side,
And raised to heaven her eyes so blue—
Alas! said she, this ghastly ride—
Dear lady! it hath wildered you!
The lady wiped her moist cold brow,
And faintly said, “’Tis over now!”

Again the wild-flower wine she drank:
Her fair large eyes ’gan glitter bright,
And from the floor whereon she sank,
The lofty lady stood upright:
She was most beautiful to see,
Like a lady of a far countree.

And thus the lofty lady spake—
“All they who live in the upper sky,

Do love you, holy Christabel!
And you love them, and for their sake
And for the good which me befel,
Even I in my degree will try,
Fair maiden, to requite you well.
But now unrobe yourself; for I
Must pray, ere yet in bed I lie.”

230

Quoth Christabel, So let it be!
And as the lady bade, did she.
Her gentle limbs did she undress,
And lay down in her loveliness.

But through her brain of weal and woe
So many thoughts moved to and fro,
That vain it were her lids to close;
So half-way from the bed she rose,
And on her elbow did recline
To look at the lady Geraldine.

240

Beneath the lamp the lady bowed,
And slowly rolled her eyes around;
Then drawing in her breath aloud,
Like one that shuddered, she unbound
The cincture from beneath her breast:
Her silken robe, and inner vest,
Dropt to her feet, and full in view,
Behold! her bosom and half her side—
A sight to dream of, not to tell!
O shield her! shield sweet Christabel!

250

Yet Geraldine nor speaks nor stirs;
Ah! what a stricken look was hers!
Deep from within she seems half-way
To lift some weight with sick assay,
And eyes the maid and seeks delay;
Then suddenly, as one defied,

260

Collects herself in scorn and pride,
And lay down by the Maiden's side!—
And in her arms the maid she took,
 Ah wel-a-day!
And with low voice and doleful look
These words did say:
“In the touch of this bosom there worketh a
 spell,
Which is lord of thy utterance, Christabel!
Thou knowest to-night, and wilt know to-morrow,
270 This mark of my shame, this seal of my sorrow;
 But vainly thou warrest,
 For this is alone in
 Thy power to declare,
 That in the dim forest
 Thou heard'st a low moaning
And found'st a bright lady, surpassingly fair;
And didst bring her home with thee in love and in
 charity,
To shield her and shelter her from the damp air.”

Conclusion to Part the First

280 It was a lovely sight to see
The lady Christabel, when she
Was praying at the old oak tree,
 Amid the jagged shadows
 Of mossy leafless boughs,
 Kneeling in the moonlight,
 To make her gentle vows;
Her slender palms together prest,
Heaving sometimes on her breast;
Her face resigned to bliss or bale—
Her face, oh, call it fair not pale,
290 And both blue eyes more bright than clear,
Each about to have a tear.

With open eyes (ah, woe is me!)
Asleep, and dreaming fearfully,
Fearfully dreaming, yet, I wis,
Dreaming that alone, which is—
O sorrow and shame! Can this be she,
The lady, who knelt at the old oak tree?
And lo! the worker of these harms,
That holds the maiden in her arms,
Seems to slumber still and mild,
As a mother with her child.

300

A star hath set, a star hath risen,
O Geraldine! since arms of thine
Have been the lovely lady's prison.
O Geraldine! one hour was thine—
Thou'st had thy will! By tairn and rill,
The night-birds all that hour were still.
But now they are jubilant anew,
From cliff and tower, tu—whoo! tu—whoo!
Tu—whoo! tu—whoo! from wood and fell!

310

And see! the lady Christabel
Gathers herself from out of her trance;
Her limbs relax, her countenance
Grows sad and soft; the smooth thin lids
Close o'er her eyes; and tears she sheds—
Large tears that leave the lashes bright!
And oft the while she seems to smile
As infants at a sudden light!

Yea, she doth smile, and she doth weep,
Like a youthful hermitess,
Beauteous in a wilderness,
Who, praying always, prays in sleep.
And, if she move unquietly,
Perchance, 'tis but the blood so free
Comes back and tingles in her feet.

320

No doubt, she hath a vision sweet.
 What if her guardian spirit 'twere,
 What if she knew her mother near?
 But this she knows, in joys and woes,
 That saints will aid if men will call:
 For the blue sky bends over all!

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE, 1797

Lines Composed a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey

ON REVISITING THE BANKS OF THE WYE DURING
 A TOUR, JULY 13, 1798

FIVE years have passed; five summers, with the
 length
 Of five long winters! and again I hear
 These waters, rolling from their mountain-springs
 With a soft inland murmur.—Once again
 Do I behold these steep and lofty cliffs,
 That on a wild secluded scene impress
 Thoughts of more deep seclusion; and connect
 The landscape with the quiet of the sky.
 The day is come when I again repose
 10 Here, under this dark sycamore, and view
 These plots of cottage-ground, these orchard-tufts,
 Which, at this season, with their unripe fruits,
 Are clad in one green hue, and lose themselves
 'Mid groves and copses. Once again I see
 These hedge-rows, hardly hedge-rows, little lines
 Of sportive wood run wild: these pastoral farms,
 Green to the very door; and wreaths of smoke
 Sent up, in silence, from among the trees!
 With some uncertain notice, as might seem

Of vagrant dwellers in the houseless woods,
Or of some Hermit's cave, where by his fire
The Hermit sits alone.

20

These beauteous forms,
Through a long absence, have not been to me
As is a landscape to a blind man's eye :
But oft, in lonely rooms, and 'mid the din
Of towns and cities, I have owed to them,
In hours of weariness, sensations sweet,
Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart ;
And passing even into my purer mind,
With tranquil restoration :—feelings too
Of unremembered pleasure : such, perhaps,
As have no slight or trivial influence
On that best portion of a good man's life,
His little, nameless, unremembered, acts
Of kindness and of love. Nor less, I trust,
To them I may have owed another gift,
Of aspect more sublime ; that blessed mood,
In which the burthen of the mystery,
In which the heavy and the weary weight
Of all this unintelligible world,
Is lightened :—that serene and blessed mood,
In which the affections gently lead us on,—
Until, the breath of this corporeal frame
And even the motion of our human blood
Almost suspended, we are laid asleep
In body, and become a living soul :
While with an eye made quiet by the power
Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
We see into the life of things.

30

40

If this
Be but a vain belief, yet, oh ! how oft—
In darkness and amid the many shapes
Of joyless daylight ; when the fretful stir
Unprofitable, and the fever of the world,

50

Have hung upon the beatings of my heart—
How oft, in spirit, have I turned to thee,
O sylvan Wye! Thou wanderer thro' the woods,
How often has my spirit turned to thee!

And now, with gleams of half-extinguish'd thought,
With many recognitions dim and faint,
60 And somewhat of a sad perplexity,
The picture of the mind revives again :
While here I stand, not only with the sense
Of present pleasure, but with pleasing thoughts
That in this moment there is life and food
For future years. And so I dare to hope,
Though changed, no doubt, from what I was, when
first
I came among these hills ; when like a roe
I bounded o'er the mountains, by the sides
Of the deep rivers, and the lonely streams,
70 Wherever nature led : more like a man
Flying from something that he dreads than one
Who sought the thing he loved. For nature then
(The coarser pleasures of my boyish days,
And their glad animal movements all gone by)
To me was all in all.—I cannot paint
What then I was. The sounding cataract
Haunted me like a passion : the tall rock,
The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,
Their colours and their forms, were then to me
80 An appetite : a feeling and a love,
That had no need of a remoter charm,
By thought supplied, nor any interest
Unborrowed from the eye.—That time is past,
And all its aching joys are now no more,
And all its dizzy raptures. Not for this
Faint I, nor mourn nor murmur : other gifts
Have followed, for such loss, I would believe,
Abundant recompense. For I have learned

To look on nature, not as in the hour
Of thoughtless youth ; but hearing oftentimes
The still, sad music of humanity,
Not harsh nor grating, though of ample power
To chasten and subdue. And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts ; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man :
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things. Therefore am I still
A lover of the meadows and the woods,
And mountains ; and of all that we behold
From this green earth ; of all the mighty world
Of eye, and ear,—both what they half create,
And what perceive ; well pleased to recognise
In nature and the language of the sense
The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,
The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul
Of all my moral being.

90

100

110

Nor perchance,
If I were not thus taught, should I the more
Suffer my genial spirits to decay :
For thou art with me here upon the banks
Of this fair river ; thou my dearest Friend,
My dear, dear Friend ; and in thy voice I catch
The language of my former heart, and read
My former pleasures in the shooting lights
Of thy wild eyes. Oh ! yet a little while
May I behold in thee what I was once,
My dear, dear Sister ! And this prayer I make,
Knowing that Nature never did betray
The heart that loved her ; 'tis her privilege,
Through all the years of this our life, to lead

120

From joy to joy : for she can so inform
 The mind that is within us, so impress
 With quietness and beauty, and so feed
 With lofty thoughts, that neither evil tongues,
 Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish men,
 130 Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all
 The dreary intercourse of daily life,
 Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb
 Our cheerful faith, that all which we behold
 Is full of blessings. Therefore let the moon
 Shine on thee in thy solitary walk ;
 And let the misty mountain-winds be free
 To blow against thee : and, in after years,
 When these wild ecstasies shall be matured
 Into a sober pleasure, when thy mind
 140 Shall be a mansion for all lovely forms,
 Thy memory be as a dwelling-place
 For all sweet sounds and harmonies ; oh ! then,
 If solitude, or fear, or pain, or grief,
 Should be thy portion, with what healing thoughts
 Of tender joy wilt thou remember me,
 And these my exhortations ! Nor, perchance—
 If I should be where I no more can hear
 Thy voice, nor catch from thy wild eyes these gleams
 Of past existence—wilt thou then forget
 150 That on the banks of this delightful stream
 We stood together ; and that I, so long
 A worshipper of Nature, hither came,
 Unwearied in that service : rather say
 With warmer love—oh ! with far deeper zeal
 Of holier love. Nor wilt thou then forget
 That after many wanderings, many years
 Of absence, these steep woods and lofty cliffs,
 And this green pastoral landscape, were to me
 More dear, both for themselves and for thy sake !

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH, 1798

Sonnet

On Milton

MILTON! thou shouldst be living at this hour :
England hath need of thee : she is a fen
Of stagnant waters : altar, sword, and pen,
Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower,
Have forfeited their ancient English dower
Of inward happiness. We are selfish men ;
Oh ! raise us up, return to us again ;
And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power.
Thy soul was like a Star, and dwelt apart ;
Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea : 10
Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free,
So didst thou travel on life's common way,
In cheerful godliness ; and yet thy heart
The lowliest duties on herself did lay.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH, 1802

Character of the Happy Warrior

WHO is the happy Warrior ? Who is he
That every man in arms should wish to be ?
—It is the generous Spirit, who, when brought
Among the tasks of real life, hath wrought
Upon the plan that pleased his boyish thought :
Whose high endeavours are an inward light
That makes the path before him always bright :
Who, with a natural instinct to discern
What knowledge can perform, is diligent to learn ;
Abides by this resolve, and stops not there, 10
But makes his moral being his prime care ;
Who, doomed to go in company with Pain,

And Fear, and Bloodshed, miserable train !
 Turns his necessity to glorious gain ;
 In face of these doth exercise a power
 Which is our human nature's highest dower ;
 Controls them and subdues, transmutes, bereaves
 Of their bad influence, and their good receives :
 By objects, which might force the soul to abate
 20 Her feeling, rendered more compassionate ;
 Is placable—because occasions rise
 So often that demand such sacrifice ;
 More skilful in self-knowledge, even more pure,
 As tempted more ; more able to endure,
 As more exposed to suffering and distress ;
 Thence, also, more alive to tenderness.
 —'Tis he whose law is reason ; who depends
 Upon that law as on the best of friends ;
 Whence, in a state where men are tempted still
 30 To evil for a guard against worse ill,
 And what in quality or act is best
 Doth seldom on a right foundation rest,
 He labours good on good to fix, and owes
 To virtue every triumph that he knows :
 —Who, if he rise to station of command,
 Rises by open means ; and there will stand
 On honourable terms, or else retire,
 And in himself possess his own desire ;
 Who comprehends his trust, and to the same
 40 Keeps faithful with a singleness of aim ;
 And therefore does not stoop, nor lie in wait
 For wealth, or honours, or for worldly state ;
 Whom they must follow ; on whose head must fall,
 Like showers of manna, if they come at all :
 Whose powers shed round him in the common strife,
 Or mild concerns of ordinary life,
 A constant influence, a peculiar grace ;
 But who, if he be called upon to face
 Some awful moment to which Heaven has joined

Great issues, good or bad for human kind, 50
 Is happy as a Lover ; and attired
 With sudden brightness, like a Man inspired ;
 And, through the heat of conflict, keeps the law
 In calmness made, and sees what he foresaw ;
 Or if an unexpected call succeed,
 Come when it will, is equal to the need :
 —He who, though thus endued as with a sense
 And faculty for storm and turbulence,
 Is yet a Soul whose master-bias leans
 To homefelt pleasures and to gentle scenes ; 60
 Sweet images ! which, wheresoe'er he be,
 Are at his heart ; and such fidelity
 It is his darling passion to approve ;
 More brave for this, that he hath much to love :—
 'Tis, finally, the Man who, lifted high,
 Conspicuous object in a Nation's eye,
 Or left unthought-of in obscurity,—
 Who, with a toward or untoward lot,
 Prosperous or adverse, to his wish or not—
 Plays, in the many games of life, that one 70
 Where what he most doth value must be won :
 Whom neither shape of danger can dismay,
 Nor thought of tender happiness betray ;
 Who, not content that former worth stand fast,
 Looks forward, persevering to the last,
 From well to better, daily self-surpast :
 Who, whether praise of him must walk the earth
 For ever, and to noble deeds give birth,
 Or he must fall, to sleep without his fame,
 And leave a dead unprofitable name— 80
 Finds comfort in himself and in his cause ;
 And, while the mortal mist is gathering, draws
 His breath in confidence of Heaven's applause :
 This is the happy Warrior ; this is He
 That every Man in arms should wish to be.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH, 1806

Ode

On the Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood

I

THERE was a time when meadow, grove, and
stream,
The earth, and every common sight,
To me did seem
Apparelled in celestial light,
The glory and the freshness of a dream.
It is not now as it hath been of yore;—
Turn wheresoe'er I may,
By night or day,
The things which I have seen I now can see no more.

II

10 The Rainbow comes and goes,
 And lovely is the Rose,
 The Moon doth with delight
Look round her when the heavens are bare,
 Waters on a starry night
 Are beautiful and fair;
 The sunshine is a glorious birth;
 But yet I know, where'er I go,
That there hath past away a glory from the earth.

III

Now, while the birds thus sing a joyous song,
20 And while the young lambs bound
 As to the tabor's sound,
To me alone there came a thought of grief:
A timely utterance gave that thought relief,
 And I again am strong:

The cataracts blow their trumpets from the steep;
No more shall grief of mine the season wrong;
I hear the Echoes through the mountains throng,
The Winds come to me from the fields of sleep,
And all the earth is gay;

Land and sea
Give themselves up to jollity,
And with the heart of May
Doth every Beast keep holiday;—
Thou Child of Joy,
Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts, thou happy
Shepherd-boy!

30

IV

Ye blessed Creatures, I have heard the call
Ye to each other make; I see
The heavens laugh with you in your jubilee;
My heart is at your festival,
My head hath its coronal,
The fulness of your bliss, I feel—I feel it all.

O evil day! if I were sullen
While Earth herself is adorning,
This sweet May-morning,
And the Children are culling
On every side,
In a thousand valleys far and wide,
Fresh flowers; while the sun shines warm,
And the Babe leaps up on his mother's arm:—

I hear, I hear, with joy I hear!
—But there's a Tree, of many, one,
A single Field which I have looked upon,
Both of them speak of something that is gone:

The Pansy at my feet
Doth the same tale repeat:
Whither is fled the visionary gleam?
Where is it now, the glory and the dream?

40

50

V

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting :
 The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,
 60 Hath had elsewhere its setting,
 And cometh from afar :
 Not in entire forgetfulness,
 And not in utter nakedness,
 But trailing clouds of glory do we come
 From God, who is our home :
 Heaven lies about us in our infancy !
 Shades of the prison-house begin to close
 Upon the growing Boy,
 But He beholds the light, and whence it flows,
 70 He sees it in his joy ;
 The Youth, who daily farther from the east
 Must travel, still is Nature's Priest,
 And by the vision splendid
 Is on his way attended ;
 At length the Man perceives it die away,
 And fade into the light of common day.

VI

Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own ;
 Yearnings she hath in her own natural kind,
 And, even with something of a Mother's mind.
 80 And no unworthy aim,
 The homely Nurse doth all she can
 To make her Foster-child, her Inmate Man,
 Forget the glories he hath known,
 And that imperial palace whence he came.

VII

Behold the Child among his new-born blisses,
 A six years' Darling of a pigmy size !
 See, where 'mid work of his own hand he lies,
 Fretted by sallies of his mother's kisses,
 With light upon him from his father's eyes !

See at his feet, some little plan or chart,
Some fragment from his dream of human life,
Shaped by himself with newly-learned art ;

90

A wedding or a festival,

A mourning or a funeral ;

And this hath now his heart,

And unto this he frames his song :

Then will he fit his tongue

To dialogues of business, love, or strife ;

But it will not be long

Ere this be thrown aside,

100

And with new joy and pride

The little Actor cons another part ;

Filling from time to time his 'humorous stage'

With all the Persons, down to palsied Age,

That Life brings with her in her equipage ;

As if his whole vocation

Were endless imitation.

VIII

Thou, whose exterior semblance doth belie

Thy Soul's immensity ;

Thou best Philosopher, who yet dost keep

110

Thy heritage, thou Eye among the blind,

That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal deep,

Haunted for ever by the eternal mind,—

Mighty Prophet! Seer blest!

On whom those truths do rest,

Which we are toiling all our lives to find,

In darkness lost, the darkness of the grave ;

Thou, over whom thy Immortality

Broods like the Day, a Master o'er a Slave,

A Presence which is not to be put by ;

120

Thou little Child, yet glorious in the might

Of heaven-born freedom on thy being's height,

Why with such earnest pains dost thou provoke

The years to bring the inevitable yoke,

Thus blindly with thy blessedness at strife?
Full soon thy soul shall have her earthly freight,
And custom lie upon thee with a weight,
Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life!

IX

130 O joy! that in our embers
 Is something that doth live,
 That nature yet remembers
 What was so fugitive!

The thought of our past years in me doth breed
Perpetual benediction: not indeed
For that which is most worthy to be blest;
Delight and liberty, the simple creed
Of Childhood, whether busy or at rest,
With new-fledged hope still fluttering in his breast:—

 Not for these I raise
140 The song of thanks and praise;
 But for those obstinate questionings
 Of sense and outward things,
 Fallings from us, vanishings;
 Blank misgivings of a Creature

Moving about in worlds not realised,
High instincts before which our mortal Nature
Did tremble like a guilty Thing surprised:

 But for those first affections,
 Those shadowy recollections,
150 Which, be they what they may,
Are yet the fountain-light of all our day,
Are yet a master light of all our seeing;
 Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make
Our noisy years seem moments in the being
Of the eternal Silence: truths that wake,

 To perish never:
Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavour,
 Nor Man nor Boy,
Nor all that is at enmity with joy,

Can utterly abolish or destroy!

160

Hence in a season of calm weather

Though inland far we be,

Our Souls have sight of that immortal sea

Which brought us hither;

Can in a moment travel thither,

And see the Children sport upon the shore,

And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

X

Then sing, ye Birds, sing, sing a joyous song!

And let the young Lambs bound

As to the tabor's sound!

170

We in thought will join your throng,

Ye that pipe and ye that play,

Ye that through your hearts to-day

Feel the gladness of the May!

What though the radiance which was once so bright

Be now for ever taken from my sight,

Though nothing can bring back the hour

Of splendour in the grass, of glory in the flower;

We will grieve not, rather find

Strength in what remains behind;

180

In the primal sympathy

Which having been must ever be;

In the soothing thoughts that spring

Out of human suffering;

In the faith that looks through death;

In years that bring the philosophic mind.

XI

And O, ye Fountains, Meadows, Hills, and Groves,

Forebode not any severing of our loves!

Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your might;

I only have relinquished one delight

190

To live beneath your more habitual sway.

I love the Brooks which down their channels fret,
Even more than when I tripped lightly as they ;
The innocent brightness of a new-born Day
Is lovely yet ;

The Clouds that gather round the setting sun
Do take a sober colouring from an eye
That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality ;
Another race hath been, and other palms are won.
200 Thanks to the human heart by which we live,
Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears,
To me the meanest flower that blows can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH, 1803-6

From "Marmion"

The Battle of Flodden

NEXT morn the Baron climb'd the tower,
To view afar the Scottish power,
Encamp'd on Flodden edge :
The white pavilions made a show,
Like remnants of the winter snow,
Along the dusky ridge.

Long Marmion look'd :—at length his eye
Unusual movement might descry

Amid the shifting lines :

10 The Scottish host drawn out appears,
For flashing on the hedge of spears

The eastern sunbeam shines.

Their front now deepening, now extending ;
Their flank inclining, wheeling, bending,
Now drawing back, and now descending,
The skilful Marmion well could know,
They watch'd the motions of some foe,
Who traversed on the plain below.

Even so it was. From Flodden ridge
The Scots beheld the English host
Leave Barmore-wood, their evening post,
And heedful watch'd them as they cross'd
The Till by Twisel Bridge.

20

High sight it is, and haughty, while
They dive into the deep defile;
Beneath the cavern'd cliff they fall,
Beneath the castle's airy wall.

By rock, by oak, by hawthorn tree,
Troop after troop are disappearing:
Troop after troop their banners rearing,
Upon the eastern bank you see.

30

Still pouring down the rocky den,
Where flows the sullen Till,
And rising from the dim-wood glen,
Standards on standards, men on men,
In slow succession still,
And, sweeping o'er the Gothic arch,
And pressing on, in ceaseless march,
To gain the opposing hill.

That morn, to many a trumpet clang,
Twisel! thy rock's deep echo rang;
And many a chief of birth and rank,
Saint Helen! at thy fountain drank.
Thy hawthorn glade, which now we see
In spring-time bloom so lavishly,
Had then from many an axe its doom,
To give the marching columns room.

40

And why stands Scotland idly now,
Dark Flodden! on thy airy brow,
Since England gains the pass the while,
And struggles through the deep defile?
What checks the fiery soul of James?
Why sits that champion of the dames
Inactive on his steed,

50

And sees, between him and his land,
Between him and Tweed's southern strand,
His host Lord Surrey lead?
What 'vails the vain knight-errant's brand?
—O, Douglas, for thy leading wand!
60 Fierce Randolph, for thy speed!
O for one hour of Wallace wight,
Or well-skill'd Bruce, to rule the fight,
And cry—"Saint Andrew and our right!"
Another sight had seen that morn,
From Fate's dark book a leaf been torn,
And Flodden had been Bannockbourne!—
The precious hour has pass'd in vain,
And England's host has gain'd the plain;
Wheeling their march, and circling still,
70 Around the base of Flodden hill.

.
"But see! look up—on Flodden bent
The Scottish foe has fired his tent!"
And sudden, as he spoke,
From the sharp ridges of the hill
All downward to the banks of Till,
Was wreathed in sable smoke.
Volumed and fast and rolling far,
The cloud enveloped Scotland's war,
As down the hill they broke;
80 Nor martial shout, nor minstrel tone,
Announced their march; their tread alone,
At times one warning trumpet blown,
At times a stifled hum,
Told England, from his mountain throne
King James did rushing come.—
Scarce could they hear, or see their foes,
Until at weapon-point they close.—
They close, in clouds of smoke and dust,
With sword-sway, and with lance's thrust;

And such a yell was there,
Of sudden and portentous birth,
As if men fought upon the earth,
And fiends in upper air ;
O, life and death were in that shout,
Recoil and rally, charge and rout,
And triumph and despair.

90

At length the freshening western blast
Aside the shroud of battle cast ;
And, first, the ridge of mingled spears
Above the brightening cloud appears ;
And in the smoke the pennons flew,
As in the storm the white sea-mew.
Then mark'd they, dashing broad and far,
The broken billows of the war,
And plumed crests of chieftains brave,
Floating like foam upon the wave ;

100

But nought distinct they see :
Wide raged the battle on the plain ;
Spears shook, and falchions flash'd amain ;
Fell England's arrow-flight like rain ;
Crests rose, and stoop'd, and rose again,
Wild and disorderly.

110

Amid the scene of tumult, high
They saw Lord Marmion's falcon fly :
And stainless Tunstall's banner white,
And Edmund Howard's lion bright,
Still bear them bravely in the fight :

Although against them come,
Of gallant Gordons many a one,
And many a stubborn Highlandman,
And many a rugged Border clan,
With Huntley, and with Home.

120

Far on the left, unseen the while,
Stanley broke Lennox and Argyle ;

Though there the western mountaineer
Rush'd with bare bosom on the spear,
And flung the feeble targe aside,
And with both hands the broadsword plied.
'Twas vain :—But Fortune, on the right,
130 With fickle smile, cheer'd Scotland's fight.
Then fell that spotless banner white,
The Howard's lion fell ;
Yet still Lord Marmion's falcon flew
With wavering flight, while fiercer grew
Around the battle-yell.
The Border slogan rent the sky !
A Home ! a Gordon ! was the cry :
Loud were the clanging blows ;
Advanced,—forced back,—now low, now high,
140 The pennon sunk and rose ;
As bends the bark's mast in the gale,
When rent are rigging, shrouds, and sail,
It waver'd 'mid the foes.

.
But as they left the dark'ning heath,
More desperate grew the strife of death.
The English shafts in volleys hail'd,
In headlong charge their horse assail'd ;
Front, flank, and rear, the squadrons sweep
To break the Scottish circle deep,
150 That fought around their King.
But yet, though thick the shafts as snow,
Though charging knights like whirlwinds go,
Though bill-men ply the ghastly blow,
Unbroken was the ring ;
The stubborn spearmen still made good
Their dark impenetrable wood,
Each stepping where his comrade stood.
The instant that he fell.
No thought was there of dastard flight ;

Link'd in the serried phalanx tight,
Groom fought like noble, squire like knight,
As fearlessly and well;

160

Till utter darkness closed her wing
O'er their thin host and wounded King.
Then skilful Surrey's sage commands
Led back from strife his shatter'd bands;
And from the charge they drew,
As mountain-waves, from wasted lands,
Sweep back to ocean blue.

Then did their loss his foemen know;
Their King, their Lords, their mightiest low,
They melted from the field as snow,
When streams are swoln and south winds blow,
Dissolves in silent dew.

170

Tweed's echo heard the ceaseless plash,
While many a broken band,
Disorder'd, through her currents dash,
To gain the Scottish land;

To town and tower, to down and dale,
To tell red Flodden's dismal tale,
And raise the universal wail.

180

Tradition, legend, tune, and song,
Shall many an age that wail prolong:
Still from the sire the son shall hear
Of the stern strife, and carnage drear,
Of Flodden's fatal field,
Where shiver'd was fair Scotland's spear,
And broken was her shield!

Day dawns upon the mountain's side:—
There, Scotland! lay thy bravest pride,
Chiefs, knights, and nobles, many a one:
The sad survivors all are gone—
View not that corpse mistrustfully,
Defaced and mangled though it be;
Nor to yon Border Castle high,

190

200

Look northward with upbraiding eye;
Nor cherish hope in vain,
That, journeying far on foreign strand,
The Royal Pilgrim to his land
May yet return again.

He saw the wreck his rashness wrought;
Reckless of life, he desperate fought,
And fell on Flodden plain;
And well in death his trusty brand,
Firm clench'd within his manly hand,
Beseem'd the monarch slain.

SIR WALTER SCOTT, 1808

From "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage"

Departure (Canto I)

CHILDE HAROLD bask'd him in the noontide
sun,
Disporting there like any other fly;
Nor deem'd before his little day was done
One blast might chill him into misery.
But long ere scarce a third of his pass'd by,
Worse than adversity the Childe befell;
He felt the fullness of satiety:
Then loathed he in his native land to dwell,
Which seem'd to him more lone than Eremite's sad
cell.

10 For he through Sin's long labyrinth had run,
Nor made atonement when he did amiss,
Had sigh'd to many though he loved but one,
And that loved one, alas! could ne'er be his.
Ah, happy she! to 'scape from him whose kiss

Had been pollution unto aught so chaste ;
Who soon had left her charms for vulgar bliss,
And spoil'd her goodly lands to gild his waste,
Nor calm domestic peace had ever deign'd to taste.

And now Childe Harold was sore sick at heart,
And from his fellow bacchanals would flee ; 20
'Tis said, at times the sullen tear would start,
And Pride congeal'd the drop within his ee :
Apart he stalk'd in joyless reverie,
And from his native land resolved to go,
And visit scorching climes beyond the sea ;
With pleasure drugg'd, he almost long'd for woe,
And e'en for change of scene would seek the shades
below.

The Childe departed from his father's hall :
It was a vast and venerable pile ;
So old, it seemed only not to fall, 30
Yet strength was pillar'd in each massy aisle.
Monastic dome ! condemn'd to uses vile !
Where Superstition once had made her den
Now Paphian girls were known to sing and smile ;
And monks might deem their time was come agen
If ancient tales say true, nor wrong these holy men.

Yet oft-times in his maddest mirthful mood
Strange pangs would flash along Childe Harold's
brow,
As if the memory of some deadly feud
Or disappointed passion lurk'd below : 40
But this none knew, nor haply cared to know ;
For his was not that open, artless soul
That feels relief by bidding sorrow flow,
Nor sought he friend to counsel or condole,
Whate'er this grief mote be, which he could not
control.

And none did love him : though to hall and bower
He gather'd revellers from far and near,
He knew them flatt'ers of the festal hour ;
The heartless parasites of present cheer.
30 Yea ! none did love him—nor his lemans dear—
But pomp and power alone are woman's care,
And where these are light Eros finds a feere ;
Maidens, like moths, are ever caught by glare,
And Mammon wins his way where Seraphs might
despair.

Childe Harold had a mother—not forgot,
Though parting from that mother he did shun ;
A sister whom he loved, but saw her not
Before his weary pilgrimage begun :
If friends he had, he bade adieu to none.
60 Yet deem not thence his breast a breast of steel :
Ye, who have known what 'tis to dote upon
A few dear objects, will in sadness feel
Such partings break the heart they fondly hope to
heal.

His house, his home, his heritage, his lands,
The laughing dames in whom he did delight,
Whose large blue eyes, fair locks, and snowy
hands,
Might shake the saintship of an anchorite,
And long had fed his youthful appetite ;
His goblets brimm'd with every costly wine,
70 And all that mote to luxury invite,
Without a sigh he left, to cross the brine,
And traverse Paynim shores, and pass Earth's central
line.

Greece (Canto II)

Fair Greece! sad relic of departed worth!
Immortal, though no more; though fallen, great!
Who now shall lead thy scatter'd children forth,
And long accustom'd bondage uncreate?
Not such thy sons who whilome did await,
The hopeless warriors of a willing doom,
In bleak Thermopylæ's sepulchral strait—
Oh! who that gallant spirit shall resume,
Leap from Eurotas' banks, and call thee from the
tomb?

80

Spirit of freedom! when on Phyle's brow
Thou sat'st with Thrasybulus and his train,
Couldst thou forbode the dismal hour which now
Dims the green beauties of thine Attic plain?
Not thirty tyrants now enforce the chain,
But every carle can lord it o'er thy land;
Nor rise thy sons, but idly rail in vain,
Trembling beneath the scourge of Turkish hand;
From birth till death enslaved; in word, in deed,
unmann'd.

90

In all save form alone, how changed! and who
That marks the fire still sparkling in each eye,
Who would but deem their bosoms burn'd anew
With thy unquenched beam, lost Liberty!
And many dream withal the hour is nigh
That gives them back their father's heritage:
For foreign arms and aid they fondly sigh,
Nor solely dare encounter hostile rage,
Or tear their name defiled from Slavery's mournful
page.

Hereditary bondsmen! know ye not
Who would be free themselves must strike the
blow?

100

By their right arms the conquest must be wrought?
Will Gaul or Muscovite redress ye? no!
True, they may lay your proud despoilers low,
But not for you will Freedom's altars flame.
Shades of the Helots! triumph o'er your foe!
Greece! change thy lords, thy state is still the same;
Thy glorious day is o'er, but not thy years of shame.

.

110 And yet how lovely in thine age of woe,
Land of lost gods and godlike men, art thou!
Thy vales of evergreen, thy hills of snow,
Proclaim thee Nature's varied favourite now:
Thy fanes, thy temples to thy surface bow,
Commingling slowly with heroic earth,
Broke by the share of every rustic plough:
So perish monuments of mortal birth,
So perish all in turn, save well-recorded Worth;

120 Save where some solitary column mourns
Above its prostrate brethren of the cave;
Save where Tritonia's airy shrine adorns
Colonna's cliff, and gleams along the wave;
Save o'er some warrior's half-forgotten grave,
Where the gray stones and unmolested grass
Ages, but not oblivion, feebly brave;
While strangers only not regardless pass,
Lingering like me, perchance, to gaze, and sigh
"Alas!"

130 Yet are thy skies as blue, thy crags as wild;
Sweet are thy groves, and verdant are thy fields,
Thine olive ripe as when Minerva smiled,
And still his honey'd wealth Hymettus yields;
There the blithe bee his fragrant fortress builds,
The freeborn wanderer of thy mountain-air;
Apollo still thy long, long summer gilds,

Still in his beam Mendeli's marbles glare ;
Art, Glory, Freedom fail, but Nature still is fair.

Where'er we tread 'tis haunted, holy ground ;
No earth of thine is lost in vulgar mould,
But one vast realm of wonder spreads around,
And all the Muse's tales seem truly told,
Till the sense aches with gazing to behold 140
The scenes our earliest dreams have dwelt upon ;
Each hill and dale, each deepening glen and wold
Defies the power which crush'd thy temples gone :
Age shakes Athena's tower, but spares gray Marathon.

Waterloo (Canto III)

There was a sound of revelry by night,
And Belgium's capital had gather'd then
Her Beauty and her Chivalry, and bright
The lamps shone o'er fair women and brave men ;
A thousand hearts beat happily ; and when
Music arose with its voluptuous swell, 150
Soft eyes look'd love to eyes which spake again,
And all went merry as a marriage bell ;
But hush ! hark ! a deep sound strikes like a rising
knell !

Did ye not hear it ?—No ; 'twas but the wind,
Or the car rattling o'er the stony street ;
On with the dance ! let joy be unconfined ;
No sleep till morn, when Youth and Pleasure meet
To chase the glowing Hours with flying feet—
But hark !—that heavy sound breaks in once
more,
As if the clouds its echo would repeat ; 160
And nearer, clearer, deadlier than before !
Arm ! Arm ! it is—it is—the cannon's opening roar !

Within a window'd niche of that high hall
Sate Brunswick's fated chieftain; he did hear
That sound the first amidst the festival,
And caught its tone with Death's prophetic ear;
And when they smiled because he deem'd it near,
His heart more truly knew that peal too well
Which stretch'd his father on a bloody bier,
170 And roused the vengeance blood alone could quell:
He rushed into the field, and, foremost fighting, fell.

Ah! then and there was hurrying to and fro,
And gathering tears, and tremblings of distress,
And cheeks all pale, which but an hour ago
Blush'd at the praise of their own loveliness;
And there were sudden partings, such as press
The life from out young hearts, and choking sighs
Which ne'er might be repeated; who could guess
If ever more should meet those mutual eyes,
180 Since upon night so sweet such awful morn could rise!

And there was mounting in hot haste: the steed,
The mustering squadron, and the clattering car,
Went pouring forward with impetuous speed,
And swiftly forming in the ranks of war;
And the deep thunder peal on peal afar;
And near, the beat of the alarming drum
Roused up the soldier ere the morning star;
While throng'd the citizens with terror dumb,
Or whispering, with white lips—"The foe! they
come! they come!"

190 And wild and high the "Cameron's gathering"
rose!

The war-note of Lochiel, which Albyn's hills
Have heard, and heard, too, have her Saxon foes:—
How in the noon of night that pibroch thrills,
Savage and shrill! But with the breath which fills

Their mountain-pipe, so fill the mountaineers
With fierce native daring which instils
The stirring memory of a thousand years,
And Evan's, Donald's fame rings in each clansman's
ears!

And Ardennes waves above them her green leaves,
Dewy with nature's tear-drops as they pass, 200
Grieving, if aught inanimate e'er grieves,
Over the unreturning brave,—alas!
Ere evening to be trodden like the grass
Which now beneath them, but above shall grow
In its next verdure, when this fiery mass
Of living valour, rolling on the foe
And burning with high hope, shall moulder cold and
low.

Last noon beheld them full of lusty life,
Last eve in Beauty's circle proudly gay,
The midnight brought the signal-sound of strife, 210
The morn the marshalling in arms,—the day
Battle's magnificently stern array!
The thunder-clouds close o'er it, which when rent
The earth is cover'd thick with other clay,
Which her own clay shall cover, heap'd and pent,
Rider and horse,—friend, foe,—in one red burial blent!

Lake Geneva (Canto III)

Clear, placid Leman! thy contrasted lake,
With the wild world I dwelt in, is a thing
Which warns me, with its stillness, to forsake
Earth's troubled waters for a purer spring. 220
This quiet sail is as a noiseless wing
To waft me from distraction; once I loved
Torn ocean's roar, but thy soft murmuring

Sounds sweet as if a Sister's voice reproved,
That I with stern delights should e'er have been so
moved.

It is the hush of night, and all between
Thy margin and the mountains, dusk, yet clear,
Mellow'd and mingling, yet distinctly seen,
Save darken'd Jura, whose cap heights appear
230 Precipitously steep; and drawing near,
There breathes a living fragrance from the shore,
Of flowers yet fresh with childhood; on the ear
Drops the light drip of the suspended oar,
Or chirps the grasshopper one good-night carol
more;

He is an evening reveller, who makes
His life an infancy, and sings his fill;
At intervals, some bird from out the brakes
Starts into voice a moment, then is still.
There seems a floating whisper on the hill,
240 But that is fancy, for the starlight dew
All silently their tears of love instil,
Weeping themselves away, till they infuse
Deep into nature's breast the spirit of her hues.

.

The sky is changed!—and such a change! Oh,
night,
And storm, and darkness, ye are wondrous
strong,
Yet lovely in your strength, as is the light
Of a dark eye in woman! Far along,
From peak to peak, the rattling crags among
Leaps the live thunder! Not from one lone cloud,
250 But every mountain now hath found a tongue,
And Jura answers, through her misty shroud,
Back to the joyous Alps, who call to her aloud!

And this is in the night :—Most glorious night !
Thou wert not sent for slumber ! let me be
A sharer in thy fierce and far delight,—
A portion of the tempest and of thee !
How the lit lake shines, a phosphoric sea,
And the big rain comes dancing to the earth !
And now again 'tis black,—and now, the glee
Of the loud hills shakes with its mountain-mirth, 260
As if they did rejoice o'er a young earthquake's
birth.

Now, where the swift Rhone cleaves his way
between
Heights which appear as lovers who have parted
In hate, whose mining depths so intervene,
That they can meet no more, though broken-
hearted ;
Though in their souls, which thus each other
thwarted,
Love was the very root of the fond rage
Which blighted their life's bloom, and then
departed :
Itself expired, but leaving them an age
Of years all winters,—war within themselves to 270
wage.

Now, where the quick Rhone thus hath cleft his
way,
The mightiest of the storms hath ta'en his stand :
For here, not one, but many, make their play,
And fling their thunder-bolts from hand to hand,
Flashing and cast around ; of all the band,
The brightest through these parted hills hath fork'd
His lightnings,—as if he did understand,
That in such gaps as desolation work'd,
There the hot shaft should blast whatever therein
lurk'd.

280 Sky, mountains, river, winds, lake, lightnings! ye!
With night, and clouds, and thunder, and a soul
To make these felt and feeling, well may be
Things that have made me watchful; the far roll
Of your departing voices, is the knoll
Of what in me is sleepless,—if I rest.
But where of ye, O tempests! is the goal?
Are ye like those within the human breast?
Or do ye find, at length, like eagles, some high nest?

Venice (Canto IV)

290 I stood in Venice, on the Bridge of Sighs,
A palace and a prison on each hand:
I saw from out the wave her structures rise
As from the stroke of the enchanter's wand:
A thousand years their cloudy wings expand
Around me, and a dying Glory smiles
O'er the far times, when many a subject land
Look'd to the winged Lion's marble piles,
Where Venice sate in state, throned on her hundred
isles!

300 She looks a sea Cybele, fresh from ocean,
Rising with her tiara of proud towers
At airy distance, with majestic motion,
A ruler of the waters and their powers:
And such she was;—her daughters had their dowers
From spoils of nations, and the exhaustless East
Pour'd in her lap all gems in sparkling showers.
In purple was she robed, and of her feast
Monarchs partook, and deem'd their dignity in-
creased.

In Venice, Tasso's echoes are no more,
And silent rows the songless gondolier;

Her palaces are crumbling to the shore,
And music meets not always now the ear : 310
Those days are gone—but Beauty still is here.
States fall, arts fade—but Nature doth not die,
Nor yet forget how Venice once was dear,
The pleasant place of all festivity,
The revel of the earth, the masque of Italy !

But unto us she hath a spell beyond
Her name in story, and her long array
Of mighty shadows, whose dim forms despond
Above the dogeless city's vanish'd sway ;
Ours is a trophy which will not decay 320
With the Rialto ; Shylock and the Moor,
And Pierre, cannot be swept or worn away—
The keystones of the arch ! though all were o'er,
For us repeopled were the solitary shore.

The Coliseum (Canto IV)

And here the buzz of eager nations ran,
In murmur'd pity, or loud-roar'd applause,
As man was slaughter'd by his fellow-man.
And wherefore slaughter'd ? wherefore, but because
Such were the bloody Circus' genial laws,
And the imperial pleasure.—Wherefore not ? 330
What matters where we fall to fill the maws
Of worms—on battle-plains or listed spot ?
Both are but theatres where the chief actors rot.

I see before me the Gladiator lie :
He leans upon his hand—his manly brow
Consents to death, but conquers agony,
And his droop'd head sinks gradually low—
And through his side the last drops, ebbing slow

From the red gash, fall heavy, one by one,
340 Like the first of a thunder shower; and now
The arena swims around him—he is gone,
Ere ceased the inhuman shout which hail'd the wretch
who won.

He heard it, but he heeded not—his eyes
Were with his heart, and that was far away;
He reck'd not of the life he lost, nor prize,
But where his rude hut by the Danube lay,
There were his young barbarians all at play,
There was their Dacian mother—he, their sire,
Butcher'd to make a Roman holiday—
350 All this rush'd with his blood.—Shall he expire
And unavenged? Arise! ye Goths, and glut your ire!

But here, where Murder breathed her bloody steam;
And here, where buzzing nations choked the ways,
And roar'd or murmur'd like a mountain stream
Dashing or winding as its torrent strays;
Here, where the Roman million's blame or praise
Was death or life, the playthings of a crowd,
My voice sounds much—and fall the stars' faint
rays

On the arena void—seats crush'd—walls bow'd—
360 And galleries, where my steps seem echoes strangely
loud.

A ruin—yet what ruin! from its mass
Walls, palaces, half-cities, have been rear'd;
Yet oft the enormous skeleton ye pass,
And marvel where the spoil could have appear'd.
Hath it indeed been plunder'd, or but clear'd?
Alas! developed, opens the decay,
When the colossal fabric's form is near'd:
It will not bear the brightness of the day,
Which streams too much on all years, man, have reft
away.

But when the rising moon begins to climb
 Its topmost arch, and gently pauses there;
 When the stars twinkle through the loops of time,
 And the low night-breeze waves along the air
 The garland-forest, which the gray walls wear,
 Like laurels on the bald first Cæsar's head;
 When the light shines serene but doth not glare,
 Then in this magic circle raise the dead:
 Heroes have trod this spot—'tis on their dust ye tread.

“While stands the Coliseum, Rome shall stand;
 When falls the Coliseum, Rome shall fall;
 And when Rome falls—the World.” From our
 own land
 Thus spake the pilgrims o'er this mighty wall
 In Saxon times, which we are wont to call
 Ancient: and these three mortal things are still
 On their foundations, and unalter'd all;
 Rome and her Ruin past Redemption's skill,
 The World, the same wide den—of thieves, or what
 ye will.

The Ocean (Canto IV)

There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,
 There is a rapture on the lonely shore,
 There is society, where none intrudes,
 By the deep Sea, and music in its roar:
 I love not Man the less, but Nature more,
 From these our interviews, in which I steal
 From all I may be, or have been before,
 To mingle with the Universe, and feel
 What I can ne'er express, yet cannot all conceal.

Roll on, thou deep and dark blue Ocean—roll!
 Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain;

400 Man marks the earth with ruin—his control
Stops with the shore; upon the watery plain
The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth remain
A shadow of man's ravage, save his own,
When, for a moment, like a drop of rain,
He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan,
Without a grave, unknell'd, uncoffin'd, and unknown.

His steps are not upon thy paths,—thy fields
Are not a spoil for him,—thou dost arise
And shake him from thee; the vile strength he
wields

410 For earth's destruction thou dost all despise,
Spurning him from thy bosom to the skies,
And send'st him, shivering in thy playful spray
And howling, to his Gods, where haply lies
His petty hope in some near port or bay,
And dashest him again to earth:—there let him lay.

The armaments which thunderstrike the walls
Of rock-built cities, bidding nations quake,
And monarchs tremble in their capitals,
The oak leviathans, whose huge ribs make
Their clay creator the vain title take
420 Of lord of thee, and arbiter of war—
These are thy toys, and, as the snowy flake,
They melt into thy yeast of waves, which mar
Alike the Armada's pride or spoils of Trafalgar.

Thy shores are empires, changed in all save thee—
Assyria, Greece, Rome, Carthage, what are they?
Thy waters wash'd them power while they were free,
And many a tyrant since; their shores obey
The stranger, slave, or savage; their decay
Has dried up realms to deserts:—not so thou;—
430 Unchangeable, save to thy wild waves' play,
Time writes no wrinkle on thine azure brow:
Such as creation's dawn beheld, thou rollest now.

Thou glorious mirror, where the Almighty's form
Glasses itself in tempests; in all time,—
Calm or convulsed, in breeze, or gale, or storm,
Icing the pole, or in the torrid clime
Dark-heaving—boundless, endless, and sublime,
The image of eternity, the throne
Of the Invisible; even from out thy slime
The monsters of the deep are made; each zone 440
Obeys thee; thou goest forth, dread, fathomless, alone.

And I have loved thee, Ocean! and my joy
Of youthful sports was on thy breast to be
Borne, like thy bubbles, onward: from a boy
I wanton'd with thy breakers—they to me
Were a delight; and if the freshening sea
Made them a terror—'twas a pleasing fear,
For I was as it were a child of thee,
And trusted to thy billows far and near,
And laid my hand upon thy mane—as I do here. 450

LORD BYRON, 1812-18

Sonnet to Homer

STANDING aloof in giant ignorance,
Of thee I hear and of the Cyclades,
As one who sits ashore and longs perchance
To visit dolphin-coral in deep seas.
So thou wast blind;—but then the veil was rent,
For Jove uncurtain'd Heaven to let thee live,
And Neptune made for thee a spumy tent,
And Pan made sing for thee his forest-hive;
Aye on the shores of darkness there is light,
And precipices show untrodden green, 10
There is a budding morrow in midnight,
There is a triple sight in blindness keen;
Such seeing hadst thou, as it once befel
To Dian, Queen of Earth, and Heaven, and Hell.

JOHN KEATS, 1818

To Autumn

SEASON of mists and mellow fruitfulness,
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;
Conspiring with him how to load and bless
 With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eaves
 run;
To bend with apples the moss'd cottage-trees,
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;
 To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells
 With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,
And still more, later flowers for the bees,
10 Until they think warm days will never cease,
 For Summer has o'er-brimm'd their clammy cells.

Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store?
Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find
Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,
 Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind;
Or on a half-reap'd furrow sound asleep,
 Drows'd with the fume of poppies, while thy hook
 Spares the next swath and all its twined flowers:
And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost keep
20 Steady thy laden head across a brook;
Or by a cyder-press, with patient look,
 Thou watchest the last oozy hours by hours.

Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where are they?
Think not of them, thou hast thy music too,—
While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying day,
And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue;
Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn
 Among the river shallows, borne aloft
 Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;
30 And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn;
Hedge-crickets sing; and now with treble soft
The red-breast whistles from a garden-croft;
And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.

JOHN KEATS, 1819

To a Nightingale

MY heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,
Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains
One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk :
'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot,
But being too happy in thine happiness,—
That thou, light-winged Dryad of the trees,
In some melodious plot
Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,
Singest of summer in full-throated ease.

10

O for a draught of vintage! that hath been
Cool'd a long age in the deep-delved earth,
Tasting of Flora and the country green,
Dance, and Provençal song, and sunburnt mirth!
O for a beaker full of the warm South,
Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,
With beaded bubbles winking at the brim,
And purple-stained mouth;
That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,
And with thee fade away into the forest dim:

20

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget
What thou among the leaves hast never known,
The weariness, the fever, and the fret
Here, where men sit and hear each other groan;
Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last gray hairs,
Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies;
Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
And leaden-eyed despairs,
Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,
Or new Love pine at them beyond to-morrow.

30

Away! away! for I will fly to thee,
Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,

o

But on the viewless wings of Poesy,
Though the dull brain perplexes and retards :
Already with thee ! tender is the night,
And haply the Queen-Moon is on her throne,
Cluster'd around by all her starry Fays ;
But here there is no light,
Save what from heaven is with the breezes blown
40 Through verdurous glooms and winding mossy
ways.

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,
Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,
But, in embalmed darkness, guess each sweet
Wherewith the seasonable month endows
The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild ;
White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglantine ;
Fast fading violets cover'd up in leaves ;
And mid-May's eldest child,
The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,
50 The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves.

Darkling I listen ; and for many a time
I have been half in love with easeful Death,
Call'd him soft names in many a mused rhyme,
To take into the air my quiet breath ;
Now more than ever seems it rich to die,
To cease upon the midnight with no pain,
While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad
In such an ecstasy !
Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in vain—
60 To thy high requiem become a sod.

Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird !
No hungry generations tread thee down ;
The voice I hear this passing night was heard
In ancient days by emperor and clown :
Perhaps the self-same song that found a path

Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,
She stood in tears amid the alien corn;
The same that oft-times hath
Charm'd magic casements, opening on the foam
Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.

70

Forlorn! the very word is like a bell
To toll me back from thee to my sole self!
Adieu! the fancy cannot cheat so well
As she is fam'd to do, deceiving elf.
Adieu! adieu! thy plaintive anthem fades
Past the near meadows, over the still stream,
Up the hill-side; and now 'tis buried deep
In the next valley-glades:
Was it a vision, or a waking dream?
Fled is that music:—Do I wake or sleep?

80

JOHN KEATS, 1819

The Eve of St Agnes

I

ST AGNES' Eve—Ah, bitter chill it was!
The owl, for all his feathers was a-cold;
The hare limp'd trembling through the frozen grass,
And silent was the flock in woolly fold:
Numb were the Beadsman's fingers, while he told
His rosary, and while his frosted breath,
Like pious incense from a censer old,
Seem'd taking flight for heaven, without a death,
Past the sweet Virgin's picture, while his prayer he
saith.

II

His prayer he saith, this patient, holy man;
Then takes his lamp, and riseth from his knees,
And back returneth, meagre, barefoot, wan,
Along the chapel aisle by slow degrees:
The sculptur'd dead, on each side, seem to freeze,

10

Emprison'd in black, purgatorial rails :
Knights, ladies, praying in dumb orat'ries,
He passeth by ; and his weak spirit fails
To think how they may ache in icy hoods and mails.

III

Northward he turneth through a little door,
20 And scarce three steps, ere Music's golden tongue
Flatter'd to tears this aged man and poor ;
But no—already had his deathbell rung :
The joys of all his life were said and sung :
His was harsh penance on St Agnes' Eve :
Another way he went, and soon among
Rough ashes sat he for his soul's reprieve,
And all night kept awake, for sinners' sake to grieve.

IV

That ancient Beadsman heard the prelude soft ;
And so it chanc'd, for many a door was wide,
30 From hurry to and fro. Soon, up aloft,
The silver, snarling trumpets 'gan to chide :
The level chambers, ready with their pride,
Were glowing to receive a thousand guests :
The carved angels, ever eager-eyed,
Star'd, where upon their heads the cornice rests,
With hair blown back, and wings put cross-wise on
their breasts.

V

At length burst in the argent revelry,
With plume, tiara, and all rich array,
Numerous as shadows haunting faerily
40 The brain, new stuff'd, in youth, with triumphs gay
Of old romance. These let us wish away,
And turn, sole-thoughted, to one Lady there,
Whose heart had brooded, all that wintry day,
On love, and wing'd St Agnes' saintly care,
As she had heard old dames full many times declare.

VI

They told her how, upon St Agnes' Eve,
 Young virgins might have visions of delight,
 And soft adorings from their loves receive
 Upon the honey'd middle of the night,
 If ceremonies due they did aright;
 As, supperless to bed they must retire,
 And couch supine their beauties, lily white;
 Nor look behind, nor sideways, but require
 Of Heaven with upward eyes for all that they desire.

50

VII

Full of this whim was thoughtful Madeline:
 The music yearning like a God in pain,
 She scarcely heard: her maiden eyes divine,
 Fix'd on the floor, saw many a sweeping train
 Pass by—she heeded not at all: in vain
 Came many a tiptoe, amorous cavalier,
 And back retir'd, not cool'd by high disdain,
 But she saw not: her heart was elsewhere:
 She sigh'd for Agnes' dreams, the sweetest of the year.

60

VIII

She danc'd along with vague, regardless eyes,
 Anxious her lips, her breathing quick and short;
 The hallow'd hour was near at hand: she sighs
 Amid the timbrels, and the thronged resort
 Of whisperers in anger, or in sport;
 'Mid looks of love, defiance, hate, and scorn,
 Hoodwink'd with faery fancy: all amort,
 Save to St Agnes and her lambs unshorn,
 And all the bliss to be before to-morrow morn.

70

IX

So, purposing each moment to retire,
 She lingered still. Meantime, across the moors,
 Had come young Porphyro, with heart on fire
 For Madeline. Beside the portal doors,

Buttressed from moonlight, stands he, and implores
All saints to give him sight of Madeline,
But for one moment in the tedious hours,
80 That he might gaze and worship all unseen;
Perchance speak, kneel, touch, kiss—in sooth such
things have been.

X

He ventures in : let no buzz'd whisper tell :
All eyes be muffled, or a hundred swords
Will storm his heart, Love's fev'rous citadel :
For him, those chambers held barbarian hordes,
Hyena foemen, and hot-blooded lords,
Whose very dogs would execrations howl
Against his lineage : not one breast affords
Him any mercy, in that mansion foul,
90 Save one old beldame, weak in body and in soul.

XI

Ah, happy chance ! the aged creature came,
Shuffling along with ivory-headed wand,
To where he stood, hid from the torch's flame,
Behind a broad hall-pillar, far beyond
The sound of merriment and chorus bland :
He startled her ; but soon she knew his face,
And grasp'd his fingers in her palsied hand,
Saying, "Mercy, Porphyro ! hie thee from this
place :
They are all here to-night, the whole blood-thirsty
race !

XII

100 "Get hence ! get hence ! there's dwarfish Hilde-
brand ;
He had a fever late, and in the fit
He cursed thee and thine, both house and land :
Then there's that old Lord Maurice, not a whit

More tame for his gray hairs—Alas me! flit!
Flit like a ghost away.”—“Ah, Gossip dear,
We’re safe enough; here in this arm-chair sit,
And tell me how”—“Good Saints! not here, not
here;
Follow me, child, or else these stones will be thy
bier.”

XIII

He follow’d through a lowly arched way,
Brushing the cobwebs with his lofty plume, 110
And as she mutter’d “Well-a—well-a-day!”
He found him in a little moonlight room,
Pale, lattic’d, chill, and silent as a tomb.
“Now tell me where is Madeline,” said he,
“O, tell me, Angela, by the holy loom
Which none but secret sisterhood may see,
When they St Agnes’ wool are weaving piously.”

XIV

“St Agnes! Ah! it is St Agnes’ Eve—
Yet men will murder upon holy days:
Thou must hold water in a witch’s sieve, 120
And be liege-lord of all the Elves and Fays,
To venture so: it fills me with amaze
To see thee, Porphyro!—St Agnes’ Eve!
God’s help! my lady fair the conjuror plays
This very night: good angels her deceive!
But let me laugh awhile, I’ve mickle time to grieve.”

XV

Feebly she laugheth in the languid moon,
While Porphyro upon her face doth look,
Like puzzled urchin on an aged crone
Who keepeth clos’d a wondrous riddle-book, 130

As spectacled she sits in chimney nook.
But soon his eyes grew brilliant, when she told
His lady's purpose ; and he scarce could brook
Tears, at the thought of those enchantments cold,
And Madeline asleep in lap of legends old.

XVI

Sudden a thought came like a full-blown rose,
Flushing his brow, and in his pained heart
Made purple riot : then doth he propose
A stratagem, that makes the beldame start :
140 "A cruel man and impious thou art :
Sweet lady, let her pray, and sleep, and dream
Alone with her good angels, far apart
From wicked men like thee. Go, go!—I deem
Thou canst not surely be the same that thou didst
seem."

XVII

"I will not harm her, by all saints I swear,"
Quoth Porphyro : "O, may I ne'er find grace
When my weak voice shall whisper its last prayer,
If one of her soft ringlets I displace,
Or look with ruffian passion in her face :
150 Good Angela, believe me by these tears ;
Or I will, even in a moment's space,
Awake, with horrid shout, my foemen's ears,
And beard them, though they be more fang'd than
wolves and bears."

XVIII

"Ah ! wilt thou affright a feeble soul ?
A poor, weak, palsy-stricken, churchyard thing,
Whose passing-bell may ere the midnight toll ;
Whose prayers for thee, each morn and evening,

Were never miss'd." Thus plaining, doth she
bring
A gentler speech from burning Porphyro ;
So woful, and of such deep sorrowing,
That Angela gives promise she will do
Whatever he shall wish, betide her weal or woe.

160

XIX

Which was, to lead him, in close secrecy,
Even to Madeline's chamber, and there hide
Him in a closet, of such privacy
That he might see her beauty unespied,
And win perhaps that night a peerless bride,
While legion'd faeries pac'd the coverlet,
And pale enchantment held her sleepy-eyed.
Never on such a night have lovers met,
Since Merlin paid his Demon all the monstrous debt.

170

XX

"It shall be as thou wishest," said the Dame :
"All cates and dainties shall be stored there
Quickly on this feast-night : by the tambour-frame
Her own lute thou wilt see : no time to spare,
For I am slow and feeble, and scarce dare
On such a catering trust my dizzy head.
Wait here, my child, with patience ; kneel in
prayer
The while : Ah ! thou must needs the lady wed,
Or may I never leave my grave among the dead."

180

XXI

So saying, she hobbled off with busy fear.
The lover's endless minutes slowly pass'd ;
The dame return'd, and whispered in his ear
To follow her ; with aged eyes aghast

From fright of dim espial. Safe at last,
Through many a dusky gallery, they gain
The maiden's chamber, silken, hush'd, and chaste;
Where Porphyro took covert, pleas'd amain.
His poor guide hurried back with agues in her brain.

XXII

190 Her falt'ring hand upon the balustrade,
Old Angela was feeling for the stair,
When Madeline, St Agnes' charmed maid,
Rose, like a mission'd spirit, unaware:
With silver taper's light, and pious care,
She turn'd, and down the aged gossip led
To a safe level matting. Now prepare,
Young Porphyro, for gazing on that bed;
She comes, she comes again, like ring-dove fray'd and
fled.

XXIII

200 Out went the taper as she hurried in;
Its little smoke, in pallid moonshine, died:
She clos'd the door, she panted, all akin
To spirits of the air, and visions wide:
No uttered syllable, or, woe betide!
But to her heart, her heart was voluble,
Paining with eloquence her balmy side;
As though a tongueless nightingale should swell
Her throat in vain, and die, heart-stifled, in her dell.

XXIV

210 A casement high and triple arch'd there was,
All garlanded with carven imag'ries
Of fruits, and flowers, and bunches of knot-grass,
And diamonded with panes of quaint device,
Innumerable of stains and splendid dyes,

As are the tiger-moth's deep-damask'd wings ;
And in the midst, 'mong thousand heraldries,
And twilight saints, and dim emblazonings,
A shielded scutcheon blush'd with blood of queens and
kings.

XXV

Full on this casement shone the wintry moon,
And threw warm gules on Madeline's fair breast,
As down she knelt for heaven's grace and boon ;
Rose-bloom fell on her hands, together prest, 220
And on her silver cross soft amethyst,
And on her hair a glory, like a saint :
She seem'd a splendid angel, newly drest,
Save wings, for heaven :—Porphyro grew faint :
She knelt, so pure a thing, so free from mortal taint.

XXVI

Anon his heart revives : her vespers done,
Of all its wreathed pearls her hair she frees ;
Unclasps her warmed jewels one by one ;
Loosens her fragrant boddice ; by degrees
Her rich attire creeps rustling to her knees : 230
Half-hidden, like a mermaid in sea-weed,
Pensive awhile she dreams awake, and sees,
In fancy, fair St Agnes in her bed,
But dares not look behind, or all the charm is fled.

XXVII

Soon, trembling in her soft and chilly nest,
In sort of wakeful swoon, perplex'd she lay,
Until the poppi'd warmth of sleep oppress'd
Her soothed limbs, and soul fatigued away ;
Flown, like a thought, until the morrow-day ;
Blissfully haven'd both from joy and pain ; 240
Clasp'd like a missal where swart Paynims pray ;
Blinded alike from sunshine and from rain,
As though a rose should shut, and be a bud again.

XXVIII

Stol'n to this paradise, and so entranced,
 Porphyro gazed upon her empty dress,
 And listen'd to her breathing, if it chanced
 To wake into a slumberous tenderness;
 Which when he heard, that minute did he bless,
 And breath'd himself : then from the closet crept,
 250 Noiseless as fear in a wide wilderness,
 And over the hush'd carpet, silent, stept,
 And 'tween the curtains peeped, where, lo!—how
 fast she slept.

XXIX

Then by the bed-side, where the faded moon
 Made a dim, silver twilight, soft he set
 A table, and, half anguish'd, threw thereon
 A cloth of woven crimson, gold, and jet :—
 O for some drowsy Morphean amulet!
 The boisterous, midnight, festive clarion,
 The kettle-drum, and far-heard clarinet,
 260 Affray his ears, though but in dying tone :—
 The hall door shuts again, and all the noise is gone.

XXX

And still she slept an azure-lidded sleep,
 In blanched linen, smooth, and lavender'd,
 While he forth from the closet brought a heap
 Of candied apple, quince, and plum, and gourd;
 With jellies soother than the creamy curd,
 And lucent syrups, tinct with cinnamon;
 Manna and dates, in argosy transferr'd
 From Fez; and spiced dainties, every one,
 270 From silken Samarcand to cedar'd Lebanon.

XXXI

These delicacies he heap'd with glowing hand
 On golden dishes and in baskets bright
 Of wreathed silver : sumptuous they stand
 In the retired quiet of the night,
 Filling the chilly room with perfume light.—
 “And now, my love, my seraph fair, awake!
 Thou art my heaven, and I thy hermit :
 Open thine eyes, for meek St Agnes' sake,
 Or I shall drowse beside thee, so my soul doth ache.”

XXXII

Thus whispering, his warm, unnerved arm
 Sank in her pillow. Shaded was her dream
 By the dusk curtains :—'twas a midnight charm
 Impossible to melt as iced stream :
 The lustrous salvers in the moonlight gleam ;
 Broad golden fringe upon the carpet lies :
 It seem'd he never, never could redeem
 From such a steadfast spell his lady's eyes ;
 So mus'd awhile, entoil'd in woofed phantasies.

280

XXXIII

Awakening up, he took her hollow lute,—
 Tumultuous,—and, in chords that tenderest be,
 He play'd an ancient ditty, long since mute,
 In Provence call'd, “La belle dame sans mercy” :
 Close to her ear touching the melody ;—
 Wherewith disturb'd, she uttered a soft moan :
 He ceased—she panted quick—and suddenly
 Her blue affrayed eyes wide open shone :
 Upon his knees he sank, pale as smooth-sculptured
 stone.

290

XXXIV

Her eyes were open, but she still beheld,
 Now wide awake, the vision of her sleep :
 300 There was a painful change, that nigh expell'd
 The blisses of her dream so pure and deep
 At which fair Madeline began to weep,
 And moan forth witless words with many a sigh ;
 While still her gaze on Porphyro would keep ;
 Who knelt, with joined hands and piteous eye,
 Fearing to move or speak, she look'd so dreamingly.

XXXV

“ Ah, Porphyro ! ” said she, “ but even now
 Thy voice was at sweet tremble in mine ear,
 Made tuneable with every sweetest vow ;
 310 And those sad eyes were spiritual and clear :
 How chang'd thou art ! how pallid, chill, and
 drear !
 Give me that voice again, my Porphyro,
 Those looks immortal, those complainings dear !
 O, leave me not in this eternal woe,
 For if thou diest, my Love, I know not where to go.”

XXXVI

Beyond a mortal man impassion'd far
 At these voluptuous accents, he arose,
 Ethereal, flush'd, and like a throbbing star
 Seen mid the sapphire heaven's deep repose ;
 320 Into her dream he melted, as the rose
 Blendeth its odour with the violet,—
 Solution sweet : meantime the frost-wind blows
 Like Love's alarum pattering the sharp sleet
 Against the window-panes ; St Agnes' moon hath set.

XXXVII

'Tis dark : quick pattereth the flaw-blown sleet :
 "This is no dream, my bride, my Madeline!"
 'Tis dark : the iced gusts still rave and beat.
 "No dream, alas! alas! and woe is mine!
 Porphyro will leave me here to fade and pine.—
 Cruel! what traitor could thee hither bring? 330
 I curse not, for my heart is lost in thine,
 Though thou forsakest a deceived thing;—
 A dove forlorn and lost with sick unpruned wing."

XXXVIII

"My Madeline! sweet dreamer! lovely bride!
 Say, may I be for aye thy vassal blest?
 Thy beauty's shield, heart-shap'd and vermeil
 dyed?
 Ah, silver shrine, here will I take my rest
 After so many hours of toil and quest,
 A famish'd pilgrim,—sav'd by miracle.
 Though I have found, I will not rob thy nest 340
 Saving of thy sweet self; if thou think'st well
 To trust, fair Madeline, to no rude infidel.

XXXIX

"Hark! 'tis an elfin-storm from faery land,
 Of haggard seeming, but a boon indeed :
 Arise—arise! the morning is at hand;—
 The bloated wassaillers will never heed :—
 Let us away, my love, with happy speed;
 There are no ears to hear, or eyes to see,—
 Drown'd all in Rhenish and the sleepy mead :
 Awake! arise! my love, and fearless be, 350
 For o'er the southern moors I have a home for thee."

XL

She hurried at his words, beset with fears,
 For there were sleeping dragons all around,
 At glaring watch, perhaps, with ready spears—
 Down the wide stairs a darkling way they found.—
 In all the house was heard no human sound.
 A chain-droop'd lamp was flickering by each door;
 The arras, rich with horseman, hawk, and hound,
 Flutter'd in the besieging wind's uproar;
 360 And the long carpets rose along the gusty floor.

XLI

They glide, like phantoms, into the wide hall;
 Like phantoms, to the iron porch, they glide;
 Where lay the Porter, in uneasy sprawl,
 With a huge empty flagon by his side:
 The wakeful bloodhound rose, and shook his hide,
 But his sagacious eye an inmate owns:
 By one, and one, the bolts full easy slide:—
 The chains lie silent on the footworn stones;—
 The key turns, and the door upon its hinges groans.

XLII

370 And they are gone: aye, ages long ago
 These lovers fled away into the storm.
 That night the Baron dreamt of many a woe,
 And all his warrior-guests, with shade and form
 Of witch, and demon, and large coffin-worm,
 Were long be-nightmar'd. Angela the old
 Died palsy-twitch'd, with meagre face deform;
 The Beadsman, after thousand aves told,
 For aye unsought-for slept amongst his ashes cold.

JOHN KEATS, 1819

Ozymandias of Egypt

I MET a traveller from an antique land
Who said : Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert. . . . Near them, on the sand,
Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown,
And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
The hand that mocked them and the heart that fed :
And on the pedestal these words appear :
“My name is Ozymandias, king of kings :
Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair !”
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare
The lone and level sands stretch far away.

10

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY, 1817

Adonais

I

I WEEP for Adonais—he is dead !
O, weep for Adonais ! though our tears
Thaw not the frost which binds so dear a head !
And thou, sad Hour, selected from all years
To mourn our loss, rouse thy obscure compeers,
And teach them thine own sorrow, say : “With me
Died Adonais ; till the Future dares
Forget the Past, his fate and fame shall be
An echo and a light unto eternity.”

II

Where wert thou, mighty Mother, when he lay,
When thy Son lay, pierced by the shaft which flies
In darkness ? where was lorn Urania
When Adonais died ? With veiled eyes,

10

'Mid listening Echoes, in her Paradise
She sate, while one, with soft enamoured breath,
Rekindled all the fading melodies,
With which, like flowers that mock the corpse
 beneath,
He had adorned and hid the coming bulk of Death.

III

Oh, weep for Adonais—he is dead!
20 Wake, melancholy Mother, wake and weep!
Yet wherefore? Quench within their burning bed
Thy fiery tears, and let thy loud heart keep,
Like his, a mute and uncomplaining sleep;
For he is gone, where all things wise and fair
Descend:—oh, dream not that the amorous Deep
Will yet restore him to the vital air;
Death feeds on his mute voice, and laughs at our
 despair.

IV

Most musical of mourners, weep again!
Lament anew, Urania!—He died
30 Who was the Sire of an immortal strain,
Blind, old, and lonely, when his country's pride.
The priest, the slave, and the liberticide,
Trampled and mocked with many a loathèd rite
Of lust and blood; he went, unterrified,
Into the gulf of death; but his clear Sprite
Yet reigns o'er earth; the third among the sons of
 light.

V

Most musical of mourners, weep anew!
Not all to that bright station dared to climb;
And happier they their happiness who knew,
40 Whose tapers yet burn through that night of time

In which suns perished ; others more sublime,
Struck by the envious wrath of man or god,
Have sunk, extinct in their refulgent prime ;
And some yet live, treading the thorny road,
Which leads, through toil and hate, to Fame's serene
abode.

VI

But now, thy youngest, dearest one, has perished—
The nursling of thy widowhood, who grew,
Like a pale flower by some sad maiden cherished,
And fed with true-love tears, instead of dew ;
Most musical of mourners, weep anew ! 50
Thy extreme hope, the loveliest and the last,
The bloom, whose petals nipped before they blew
Died on the promise of the fruit, is waste ;
The broken lily lies—the storm is overpast.

VII

To that high Capital, where kingly Death
Keeps his pale court in beauty and decay,
He came ; and bought, with price of purest breath,
A grave among the eternal.—Come away !
Haste, while the vault of blue Italian day
Is yet his fitting charnel-roof ! while still 60
He lies, as if in dewy sleep he lay ;
Awake him not ! Surely he takes his fill
Of deep and liquid rest, forgetful of all ill.

VIII

He will awake no more, oh, never more !—
Within the twilight chamber spreads apace
The shadow of white Death, and at the door
Invisible Corruption waits to trace

His extreme way to her dim dwelling-place;
The eternal Hunger sits, but pity and awe
70 Soothe her pale rage, nor dares she to deface
So fair a prey, till darkness, and the law
Of change, shall o'er his sleep the mortal curtain draw.

IX

Oh, weep for Adonais!—The quick Dreams,
The passion-winged Ministers of thought,
Who were his flocks, whom near the living streams
Of his young spirit he fed, and whom he taught
The love which was its music, wander not,—
Wander no more, from kindling brain to brain,
But droop there, whence they sprung; and mourn
their lot
80 Round the cold heart, where, after their sweet pain,
They ne'er will gather strength, or find a home again.

X

And one with trembling hands clasps his cold head,
And fans him with her moonlight wings, and cries;
“Our love, our hope, our sorrow, is not dead;
See, on the silken fringe of his faint eyes,
Like dew upon a sleeping flower, there lies
A tear some Dream has loosened from his brain.”
Lost Angel of a ruined Paradise!
She knew not 'twas her own; as with no stain
90 She faded, like a cloud which had outwept its rain.

XI

One from a lucid urn of starry dew
Washed his light limbs as if embalming them;
Another clipped her profuse locks, and threw
The wreath upon him, like an anadem,

Which frozen tears instead of pearls begem;
Another in her wilful grief would break
Her bow and winged reeds, as if to stem
A greater loss with one which was more weak;
And dull the barbed fire against his frozen cheek.

XII

Another Splendour on his mouth alit, 100
That mouth, whence it was wont to draw the breath
Which gave it strength to pierce the guarded wit,
And pass into the panting heart beneath
With lightning and with music: the damp death
Quenched its caress upon its icy lips;
And, as a dying meteor stains a wreath
Of moonlight vapour, which the cold night clips,
It flushed through his pale limbs, and passed to its
eclipse.

XIII

And others came . . . Desires and Adorations, 110
Winged Persuasions and veiled Destinies,
Splendours, and Glooms, and glimmering Incar-
nations
Of hopes and fears, and twilight Phantasies;
And Sorrow, with her family of Sighs,
And Pleasure, blind with tears, led by the gleam
Of her own dying smile instead of eyes,
Came in slow pomp;—the moving pomp might
seem
Like pageantry of mist on an autumnal stream.

XIV

All he had loved, and moulded into thought,
From shape, and hue, and odour, and sweet sound,
Lamented Adonais. Morning sought 120
Her eastern watch-tower, and her hair unbound,

Wet with the tears which should adorn the ground,
Dimmed the aerial eyes that kindle day;
Afar the melancholy thunder moaned,
Pale Ocean in unquiet slumber lay,
And the wild Winds flew around, sobbing in their
dismay.

XV

130 Lost Echo sits amid the voiceless mountains,
And feeds her grief with his remembered lay,
And will no more reply to winds or fountains,
Or amorous birds perched on the young green spray,
Or herdsman's horn, or bell at closing day;
Since she can mimic not his lips, more dear
Than those for whose disdain she pined away
Into a shadow of all sounds :—a drear
Murmur, between their songs, is all the woodmen
hear.

XVI

140 Grief made the young Spring wild, and she threw
down
Her kindling buds, as if she Autumn were,
Or they dead leaves; since her delight is flown,
For whom should she have waked the sullen year?
To Phœbus was not Hyacinth so dear,
Nor to himself Narcissus, as to both
Thou, Adonais: wan they stand and sere
Amid the faint companions of their youth,
With dew all turned to tears; odour, to sighing ruth.

XVII

Thy spirit's sister, the lorn nightingale,
Mourns not her mate with such melodious pain;
Not so the eagle, who like thee could scale
Heaven, and could nourish in the sun's domain

Her mighty youth with morning, doth complain,
Soaring and screaming round her empty nest, 150
As Albion wails for thee : the curse of Cain
Light on his head who pierced thy innocent breast,
And scared the angel soul that was its earthly guest !

XVIII

Ah, woe is me ! Winter is come and gone,
But grief returns with the revolving year ;
The airs and streams renew their joyous tone ;
The ants, the bees, the swallows, reappear ;
Fresh leaves and flowers deck the dead Seasons'
bier ;
The amorous birds now pair in every brake,
And build their mossy homes in field and brere ; 160
And the green lizard, and the golden snake,
Like unimprisoned flames, out of their trance awake.

XIX

Through wood and stream and field and hill and
Ocean
A quickening life from the Earth's heart has burst
As it has ever done, with change and motion,
From the great morning of the world when first
God dawned on Chaos ; in its stream immersed,
The lamps of Heaven flash with a softer light ;
All baser things pant with life's sacred thirst ;
Diffuse themselves ; and spend in love's delight, 170
The beauty and the joy of their renewed might.

XX

The leprous corpse, touched by this spirit tender,
Exhales itself in flowers of gentle breath ;
Like incarnations of the stars, when splendour
Is changed to fragrance, they illumine death

And mock the merry worm that wakes beneath;
Nought we know, dies. Shall that alone which
knows

Be as a sword consumed before the sheath
By sightless lightning?—the intense atom glows
180 A moment, then is quenched in a most cold repose.

XXI

Alas! that all we loved of him should be,
But for our grief, as if it had not been,
And grief itself be mortal! Woe is me!
Whence are we, and why are we? of what scene
The actors or spectators? Great and mean
Meet massed in death, who lends what life must
borrow.

As long as skies are blue, and fields are green,
Evening must usher night, night urge the morrow,
Month follow month with woe, and year wake year to
sorrow.

XXII

190 He will awake no more, oh, never more!
“Wake thou,” cried Misery, “childless Mother, rise
Out of thy sleep, and slake, in thy heart’s core,
A wound more fierce than his, with tears and sighs.”
And all the Dreams that watched Urania’s eyes,
And all the Echoes whom their sister’s song
Had held in holy silence, cried: “Arise!”
Swift as a Thought by the snake Memory stung,
From her ambrosial rest the fading Splendour sprung.

XXIII

200 She rose like an autumnal Night, that springs
Out of the East, and follows wild and drear
The golden Day, which, on eternal wings,
Even as a ghost abandoning a bier,

Has left the Earth a corpse. Sorrow and fear
So struck, so roused, so rapt Urania;
So saddened round her like an atmosphere
Of stormy mist; so swept her on her way
Even to the mournful place where Adonais lay.

XXIV

Out of her secret Paradise she sped,
Through camps and cities rough with stone and
steel,
And human hearts, which to her aery tread 210
Yielding not, wounded the invisible
Palms of her tender feet where'er they fell:
And barbed tongues, and thoughts more sharp than
they,
Rent the soft Form they never could repel,
Whose sacred blood, like the young tears of May,
Paved with eternal flowers that undeserving way.

XXV

In the death-chamber for a moment Death,
Shamed by the presence of that living Might,
Blushed to annihilation, and the breath
Revisited those lips, and Life's pale light 220
Flashed through those limbs, so late her dear
delight.
"Leave me not wild and drear and comfortless,
As silent lightning leaves the starless night!
Leave me not!" cried Urania: her distress
Roused Death: Death rose and smiled, and met her
vain caress.

XXVI

"Stay yet awhile! speak to me once again;
Kiss me, so long but as a kiss may live;
And in my heartless breast and burning brain
That word, that kiss, shall all thoughts else survive,

230 With food of saddest memory kept alive,
Now thou art dead, as if it were a part
Of thee, my Adonais! I would give
All that I am to be as thou now art!
But I am chained to Time, and cannot thence depart!

XXVII

“O gentle child, beautiful as thou wert,
Why didst thou leave the trodden paths of men
Too soon, and with weak hands though mighty
heart
Dare the unpastured dragon in his den?
Defenceless as thou wert, oh, where was then
240 Wisdom the mirrored shield, or scorn the spear?
Or hadst thou waited the full cycle, when
Thy spirit should have filled its crescent sphere,
The monsters of life's waste had fled from thee like
deer.

XXVIII

“The herded wolves, bold only to pursue;
The obscene ravens, clamorous o'er the dead;
The vultures, to the conqueror's banner true
Who feed where Desolation first has fed,
And whose wings rain contagion;—how they fled,
When, like Apollo, from his golden bow,
250 The Pythian of the age one arrow sped
And smiled!—The spoilers tempt no second blow,
They fawn on the proud feet that spurn them lying
low.

XXIX

“The sun comes forth, and many reptiles spawn;
He sets, and each ephemeral insect then
Is gathered into death without a dawn,
And the immortal stars awake again;

So it is in the world of living men :
A godlike mind soars forth, in its delight
Making earth bare and veiling heaven, and when
It sinks, the swarms that dimmed or shared its light 260
Leave to its kindred lamps the spirit's awful night."

XXX

Thus ceased she : and the mountain shepherds came,
Their garlands sere, their magic mantles rent ;
The Pilgrim of Eternity, whose fame
Over his living head like Heaven is bent,
An early but enduring monument,
Came, veiling all the lightnings of his song
In sorrow ; from her wilds Ierne sent
The sweetest lyrist of her saddest wrong,
And Love taught Grief to fall like music from his
tongue.

270

XXXI

Midst others of less note, came one frail Form,
A phantom among men ; companionless
As the last cloud of an expiring storm
Whose thunder is its knell ; he, as I guess,
Had gazed on Nature's naked loveliness,
Actæon-like, and now he fled astray
With feeble steps o'er the world's wilderness,
And his own thoughts, along that rugged way,
Pursued, like raging hounds, their father and their
prey.

XXXII

A pardlike Spirit beautiful and swift—
A Love in desolation masked ;—a Power
Girt round with weakness ;—it can scarce uplift
The weight of the superincumbent hour ;

280

It is a dying lamp, a falling shower,
A breaking billow;—even whilst we speak
Is it not broken? On the withering flower
The killing sun smiles brightly: on a cheek
The life can burn in blood, even while the heart may
break.

XXXIII

290 His head was bound with pansies overblown,
And faded violets, white, and pied, and blue;
And a light spear topped with a cypress cone,
Round whose rude shaft dark ivy-tresses grew
Yet dripping with the forest's noonday dew,
Vibrated, as the ever-beating heart
Shook the weak hand that grasped it; of that crew
He came the last, neglected and apart;
A herd-abandoned deer struck by the hunter's dart.

XXXIV

All stood aloof, and at his partial moan
Smiled through their tears; well knew that gentle
band
300 Who in another's fate now wept his own,
As in the accents of an unknown land
He sung new sorrow; sad Urania scanned
The Stranger's mien, and murmured: "Who art
thou?"
He answered not, but with a sudden hand
Made bare his branded and ensanguined brow,
Which was like Cain's, or Christ's—oh! that it should
be so!

XXXV

What softer voice is hushed over the dead?
Athwart what brow is that dark mantle thrown?
What form leans sadly o'er the white death-bed,
310 In mockery of monumental stone,

The heavy heart heaving without a moan?
If it be He, who, gentlest of the wise,
Taught, soothed, loved, honoured the departed one,
Let me not vex, with inharmonious sighs,
The silence of that heart's accepted sacrifice.

XXXVI

Our Adonais has drunk poison—oh!
What deaf and viperous murderer could crown
Life's early cup with such a draught of woe?
The nameless worm would now itself disown:
It felt, yet could escape, the magic tone 320
Whose prelude held all envy, hate, and wrong,
But what was howling in one breast alone,
Silent with expectation of the song,
Whose master's hand is cold, whose silver lyre
unstrung.

XXXVII

Live thou, whose infamy is not thy fame!
Live! fear no heavier chastisement from me,
Thou noteless blot on a remembered name!
But be thyself, and know thyself to be!
And ever at thy season be thou free
To spill the venom when thy fangs o'erflow: 330
Remorse and Self-contempt shall cling to thee;
Hot Shame shall burn upon thy secret brow,
And like a beaten hound tremble thou shalt—as now.

XXXVIII

Nor let us weep that our delight is fled
Far from these carrion kites that scream below;
He wakes or sleeps with the enduring dead;
Thou canst not soar where he is sitting now—

Dust to the dust! but the pure spirit shall flow
Back to the burning fountain whence it came,
340 A portion of the Eternal, which must glow
Through time and change, unquenchably the same,
Whilst thy cold embers choke the sordid hearth of
shame.

XXXIX

Peace, peace! he is not dead, he doth not sleep—
He hath awakened from the dream of life—
'Tis we, who lost in stormy visions, keep
With phantoms an unprofitable strife,
And in mad trance, strike with our spirit's knife
Invulnerable nothings.—*We* decay
Like corpses in a charnel; fear and grief
350 Convulse us and consume us day by day,
And cold hopes swarm like worms within our living
clay.

XL

He has outsoared the shadow of our night;
Envy and calumny and hate and pain,
And that unrest which men miscall delight,
Can touch him not and torture not again;
From the contagion of the world's slow stain
He is secure, and now can never mourn
A heart grown cold, a head grown grey in vain;
Nor, when the spirit's self has ceased to burn,
360 With sparkless ashes load an unlamented urn.

XLI

He lives, he wakes—'tis Death is dead, not he;
Mourn not for Adonais.—Thou young Dawn,
Turn all thy dew to splendour, for from thee
The spirit thou lamentest is not gone;

Ye caverns and ye forests, cease to moan!
Cease, ye faint flowers and fountains, and thou Air,
Which like a mourning veil thy scarf hadst thrown
O'er the abandoned Earth, now leave it bare
Even to the joyous stars which smile on its despair!

XLII

He is made one with Nature : there is heard 370
His voice in all her music, from the moan
Of thunder, to the song of night's sweet bird ;
He is a presence to be felt and known
In darkness and in light, from herb and stone,
Spreading itself where'er that Power may move
Which has withdrawn his being to its own ;
Which wields the world with never-wearied love,
Sustains it from beneath, and kindles it above.

XLIII

He is a portion of the loveliness
Which once he made more lovely : he doth bear 380
His part, while the one Spirit's plastic stress
Sweeps through the dull dense world, compelling
there,
All new successions to the forms they wear ;
Torturing th' unwilling dross that checks its flight
To its own likeness, as each mass may bear ;
And bursting in its beauty and its might
From trees and beasts and men into the Heaven's light.

XLIV

The splendours of the firmament of time
May be eclipsed, but are extinguished not ;
Like stars to their appointed height they climb, 390
And death is a low mist which cannot blot

The brightness it may veil. When lofty thought
Lifts a young heart above its mortal lair,
And love and life contend in it, for what
Shall be its earthly doom, the dead live there
And move like winds of light on dark and stormy air.

XLV

The inheritors of unfulfilled renown
Rose from their thrones, built beyond mortal
thought,
Far in the Unapparent. Chatterton
400 Rose pale,—his solemn agony had not
Yet faded from him; Sidney, as he fought
And as he fell and as he lived and loved
Sublimely mild, a Spirit without spot,
Arose; and Lucan, by his death approved:
Oblivion as they rose shrank like a thing reprovèd.

XLVI

And many more, whose names on Earth are dark,
But whose transmitted effluence cannot die
So long as fire outlives the parent spark,
Rose, robed in dazzling immortality.
410 “Thou art become as one of us,” they cry,
“It was for thee yon kingless sphere has long
Swung blind in unascended majesty,
Silent alone amid a Heaven of Song.
Assume thy winged throne, thou Vesper of our
throng!”

XLVII

Who mourns for Adonais? Oh, come forth,
Fond wretch! and know thyself and him aright.
Clasp with thy panting soul the pendulous Earth;
As from a centre, dart thy spirit's light

Beyond all worlds, until its spacious might
Sate the void circumference : then shrink 420
Even to a point within our day and night ;
And keep thy heart light lest it make thee sink
When hope has kindled hope, and lured thee to the
brink.

XLVIII

Or go to Rome, which is the sepulchre,
Oh, not of him, but of our joy : 'tis nought
That ages, empires, and religions there
Lie buried in the ravage they have wrought ;
For such as he can lend,—they borrow not
Glory from those who made the world their prey ;
And he is gathered to the kings of thought 430
Who waged contention with their time's decay,
And of the past are all that cannot pass away.

XLIX

Go thou to Rome,—at once the Paradise,
The grave, the city, and the wilderness ;
And where its wrecks like shattered mountains rise,
And flowering weeds, and fragrant copses dress
The bones of Desolation's nakedness
Pass, till the spirit of the spot shall lead
Thy footsteps to a slope of green access
Where, like an infant's smile, over the dead 440
A light of laughing flowers along the grass is spread ;

L

And gray walls moulder round, on which dull Time
Feeds, like slow fire upon a hoary brand ;
And one keen pyramid with wedge sublime,
Pavilions the dust of him who planned
This refuge for his memory, doth stand

Like flame transformed to marble; and beneath,
A field is spread, on which a newer band
Have pitched in Heaven's smile their camp of death,
450 Welcoming him we lose with scarce extinguished
breath.

LI

Here pause: these graves are all too young as yet
To have outgrown the sorrow which consigned
Its charge to each; and if the seal is set,
Here, on one fountain of a mourning mind,
Break it not thou! too surely shalt thou find
Thine own well full, if thou returnest home,
Of tears and gall. From the world's bitter wind
Seek shelter in the shadow of the tomb.
What Adonais is, why fear we to become?

LII

460 The One remains, the many change and pass;
Heaven's light for ever shines, Earth's shadows fly;
Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass,
Stains the white radiance of Eternity,
Until Death tramples it to fragments.—Die,
If thou wouldst be with that which thou dost seek!
Follow where all is fled!—Rome's azure sky,
Flowers, ruins, statues, music, words are weak
The glory they transfuse with fitting truth to speak.

LIII

470 Why linger, why turn back, why shrink, my Heart?
Thy hopes are gone before: from all things here
They have departed; thou shouldst now depart!
A light is passed from the revolving year,
And man, and woman; and what still is dear
Attracts to crush, repels to make thee wither.
The soft sky smiles,—the low wind whispers near:
'Tis Adonais calls! Oh, hasten thither,
No more let Life divide what Death can join together.

LIV

That Light whose smile kindles the Universe,
 That Beauty in which all things work and move,
 That Benediction which the eclipsing Curse 480
 Of birth can quench not, that sustaining Love
 Which through the web of being blindly wove
 By man and beast and earth and air and sea,
 Burns bright or dim, as each are mirrors of
 The fire for which all thirst; now beams on me,
 Consuming the last clouds of cold mortality.

LV

The breath whose might I have invoked in song
 Descends on me; my spirit's bark is driven,
 Far from the shore, far from the trembling throng
 Whose sails were never to the tempest given; 490
 The massy earth and sphered skies are riven!
 I am borne darkly, fearfully, afar;
 Whilst, burning through the inmost veil of Heaven,
 The soul of Adonais, like a star,
 Beacons from the abode where the Eternal are.

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY, 1821

The Lotos-eaters

COURAGE!" he said, and pointed toward the
 land,
 "This mounting wave will roll us shoreward soon."
 In the afternoon they came unto a land
 In which it seemed always afternoon.
 All round the coast the languid air did swoon,
 Breathing like one that hath a weary dream.
 Full-faced above the valley stood the moon;
 And like a downward smoke, the slender stream
 Along the cliff to fall and pause and fall did seem.

10 A land of streams! some, like a downward smoke,
Slow-dropping veils of thinnest lawn, did go;
And some thro' wavering lights and shadows broke,
Rolling a slumbrous sheet of foam below.
They saw the gleaming river seaward flow
From the inner land: far off, three mountain-tops,
Three silent pinnacles of aged snow,
Stood sunset-flush'd: and, dew'd with showery drops,
Up-clomb the shadowy pine above the woven copse.

The charmed sunset linger'd low adown
20 In the red West: thro' mountain clefts the dale
Was seen far inland, and the yellow down
Border'd with palm, and many a winding vale
And meadow, set with slender galingale;
A land where all things always seem'd the same!
And round about the keel with faces pale,
Dark faces pale against that rosy flame,
The mild-eyed melancholy Lotos-eaters came.

Branches they bore of that enchanted stem,
Laden with flower and fruit, whereof they gave
30 To each, but whoso did receive of them
And taste, to him the gushing of the wave
Far far away did seem to mourn and rave
On alien shores; and if his fellow spake,
His voice was thin, as voices from the grave;
And deep-asleep he seem'd, yet all awake,
And music in his ears his beating heart did make.

They sat them down upon the yellow sand,
Between the sun and moon upon the shore;
And sweet it was to dream of Fatherland,
40 Of child, and wife, and slave; but evermore
Most weary seem'd the sea, weary the oar,
Weary the wandering fields of barren foam.
Then some one said, "We will return no more";
And all at once they sang, "Our island home
Is far beyond the wave; we will no longer roam."

Choric Song

I

There is sweet music here that softer falls
Than petals from blown roses on the grass,
Or night-dews on still waters between walls
Of shadowy granite, in a gleaming pass ;
Music that gentlier on the spirit lies, 50
Than tir'd eyelids upon tir'd eyes ;
Music that brings sweet sleep down from the blissful
skies.

Here are cool mosses deep,
And thro' the moss the ivies creep,
And in the stream the long-leaved flowers weep,
And from the craggy ledge the poppy hangs in sleep.

II

Why are we weigh'd upon with heaviness,
And utterly consumed with sharp distress,
While all things else have rest from weariness ?
All things have rest : why should we toil alone, 60
We only toil, who are the first of things,
And make perpetual moan,
Still from one sorrow to another thrown ;
Nor ever fold our wings,
And cease from wanderings,
Nor steep our brows in slumber's holy balm ;
Nor hearken what the inner spirit sings,
"There is no joy but calm !"
Why should we only toil, the roof and crown of
things ?

III

Lo ! in the middle of the wood, 70
The folded leaf is woo'd from out the bud
With winds upon the branch, and there
Grows green and broad, and takes no care,

Sun-steep'd at noon, and in the moon
Nightly dew-fed; and turning yellow
Falls, and floats adown the air.
Lo! sweeten'd with the summer light,
The full-juiced apple, waxing over-mellow,
Drops in a silent autumn night.

80 All its allotted length of days
The flower ripens in its place,
Ripens, and fades, and falls, and hath no toil,
Fast-rooted in the fruitful soil.

IV

Hateful is the dark-blue sky,
Vaulted o'er the dark-blue sea.
Death is the end of life; ah, why
Should life all labour be?

Let us alone. Time driveth onward fast,
And in a little while our lips are dumb.
90 Let us alone. What is it that will last?
All things are taken from us, and become
Portions and parcels of the dreadful Past.
Let us alone. What pleasure can we have
To war with evil? Is there any peace
In ever climbing up the climbing wave?
All things have rest, and ripen toward the grave
In silence; ripen, fall, and cease:
Give us long rest or death, dark death, or dreamful
ease.

V

How sweet it were, hearing the downward stream,
100 With half-shut eyes ever to seem
Falling asleep in a half-dream!
To dream and dream, like yonder amber light,
Which will not leave the myrrh-bush on the height;
To hear each other's whisper'd speech,

Eating the Lotos day by day,
To watch the crisping ripples on the beach,
And tender curving lines of creamy spray ;
To lend our hearts and spirits wholly
To the influence of mild-minded melancholy ;
To muse and brood and live again in memory, 110
With those old faces of our infancy
Heaped over with a mound of grass,
Two handfuls of white dust, shut in an urn of brass !

VI

Dear is the memory of our wedded lives,
And dear the last embraces of our wives
And their warm tears : but all hath suffer'd change :
For surely now our household hearths are cold :
Our sons inherit us : our looks are strange :
And we should come like ghosts to trouble joy.
Or else the island princes over-bold 120
Have eat our substance, and the minstrel sings
Before them of the ten years' war in Troy,
And our great deeds, as half-forgotten things.
Is there confusion in the little isle ?
Let what is broken so remain.
The Gods are hard to reconcile :
'Tis hard to settle order once again.
There *is* confusion worse than death,
Trouble on trouble, pain on pain,
Long labour unto aged breath, 130
Sore task to hearts worn out by many wars,
And eyes grown dim with gazing on the pilot-stars.

VII

But, propt on beds of amaranth and moly,
How sweet (while warm airs lull us, blowing lowly)
With half-dropt eyelid still,
Beneath a heaven dark and holy,
To watch the long bright river drawing slowly

His waters from the purple hill—
To hear the dewy echoes calling
140 From cave to cave thro' the thick-twined vine—
To watch the emerald-colour'd water falling
Thro' many a wov'n acanthus-wreath divine!
Only to hear and see the far-off sparkling brine,
Only to hear were sweet, stretch'd out beneath the
pine.

VIII

The Lotos blooms below the barren peak :
The Lotos blows by every winding creek :
All day the wind breathes low with mellower tone :
Thro' every hollow cave and alley lone
Round and round the spicy downs the yellow Lotos-
dust is blown.
150 We have had enough of action, and of motion we,
Roll'd to starboard, roll'd to larboard, when the surge
was seething free,
Where the wallowing monster spouted his foam-
fountains in the sea.
Let us swear an oath, and keep it with an equal mind,
In the hollow Lotos-land to live and lie reclined
On the hills like Gods together, careless of mankind.
For they lie beside their nectar, and the bolts are
hurl'd
Far below them in the valleys, and the clouds are
lightly curl'd
Round their golden houses, girdled with the gleaming
world :
Where they smile in secret, looking over wasted lands,
160 Blight and famine, plague and earthquake, roaring
deeps and fiery sands,
Clanging fights, and flaming towns, and sinking ships,
and praying hands.
But they smile, they find a music centred in a doleful
song

Steaming up, a lamentation and an ancient tale of
 wrong,
 Like a tale of little meaning tho' the words are
 strong;
 Chanted from an ill-used race of men that cleave the
 soil,
 Sow the seed, and reap the harvest with enduring toil,
 Storing yearly little dues of wheat and wine and oil;
 Till they perish and they suffer—some 'tis whisper'd
 —down in hell
 Suffer endless anguish, others in Elysian valleys dwell,
 Resting weary limbs at last on beds of asphodel. 170
 Surely, surely, slumber is more sweet than toil, the
 shore
 Than labour in the deep mid-ocean, wind and wave
 and oar;
 Oh, rest ye, brother mariners, we will not wander more.

LORD TENNYSON, 1832

Morte d'Arthur

SO all day long the noise of battle roll'd
 Among the mountains by the winter sea;
 Until King Arthur's table, man by man,
 Had fallen in Lyonesse about their Lord,
 King Arthur : then, because his wound was deep,
 The bold Sir Bedivere uplifted him,
 Sir Bedivere, the last of all his knights,
 And bore him to a chapel nigh the field,
 A broken chancel with a broken cross,
 That stood on a dark strait of barren land. 10
 On one side lay the Ocean, and on one
 Lay a great water, and the moon was full.

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere :
 "The sequel of to-day unsolders all

The goodliest fellowship of famous knights
Whereof this world holds record. Such a sleep
They sleep—the men I loved. I think that we
Shall never more, at any future time,
Delight our souls with talk of knightly deeds,
20 Walking about the gardens and the halls
Of Camelot, as in the days that were.
I perish by this people which I made,—
Tho' Merlin sware that I should come again
To rule once more—but let what will be, be,
I am so deeply smitten thro' the helm
That without help I cannot last till morn.
Thou therefore take my brand Excalibur,
Which was my pride : for thou rememberest how
In those old days, one summer noon, an arm
30 Rose up from out the bosom of the lake,
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
Holding the sword—and how I row'd across
And took it, and have worn it, like a king ;
And, wheresoever I am sung or told
In aftertime, this also shall be known :
But now delay not : take Excalibur,
And fling him far into the middle mere :
Watch what thou seest, and lightly bring me word."

To him replied the bold Sir Bedivere :
40 "It is not meet, Sir King, to leave thee thus,
Aidless, alone, and smitten thro' the helm.
A little thing may harm a wounded man.
Yet I thy hest will all perform at full,
Watch what I see, and lightly bring thee word."

So saying, from the ruin'd shrine he stept
And in the moon athwart the place of tombs,
Where lay the mighty bones of ancient men,
Old knights, and over them the sea-wind sang
Shrill, chill, with flakes of foam. He, stepping down

By zig-zag paths, and juts of pointed rock,
Came on the shining levels of the lake.

50

Then drew he forth the brand Excalibur,
And o'er him, drawing it, the winter moon,
Brightening the skirts of a long cloud, ran forth
And sparkled keen with frost against the hilt :
For all the haft twinkled with diamond sparks,
Myriads of topaz-lights, and jacinth-work
Of subtlest jewellery. He gazed so long
That both his eyes were dazzled, as he stood,
This way and that dividing the swift mind,
In act to throw : but at the last it seem'd
Better to leave Excalibur conceal'd
There in the many-knotted water-flags,
That whistled stiff and dry about the marge.
So strode he back slow to the wounded King.

60

Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere :
"Hast thou performed my mission which I gave ?
What is it thou hast seen ? or what hast heard ?"
And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere :
"I heard the ripple washing in the reeds,
And the wild water lapping on the crag."
To whom replied King Arthur, faint and pale :
"Thou hast betray'd thy nature and thy name,
Not rendering true answer, as beseem'd
Thy fealty, nor like a noble knight :
For surer sign had follow'd, either hand,
Or voice, or else a motion of the mere.
This is a shameful thing for men to lie.
Yet now, I charge thee, quickly go again
As thou art lief and dear, and do the thing
I bade thee, watch, and lightly bring me word."

70

80

Then went Sir Bedivere the second time
Across the ridge, and paced beside the mere,
Counting the dewy pebbles, fix'd in thought ;

But when he saw the wonder of the hilt,
How curiously and strangely chased, he smote
His palms together, and he cried aloud,

“And if indeed I cast the brand away,
Surely a precious thing, one worthy note,
90 Should thus be lost for ever from the earth,
Which might have pleased the eyes of many men.
What good should follow this, if this were done?
What harm, undone? deep harm to disobey,
Since obedience is the bond of rule.
Were it well to obey then, if a king demand
An act unprofitable, against himself?
The King is sick, and knows not what he does.
What record, or what relic of my lord
Should be to aftertime, but empty breath
100 And rumours of a doubt? but were this kept,
Stored in some treasure-house of mighty kings,
Some one might show it at a joust of arms,
Saying, ‘King Arthur’s sword, Excalibur,
Wrought by the lonely maiden of the Lake.
Nine years she wrought it, sitting in the deeps
Upon the hidden bases of the hills.’
So might some old man speak in the aftertime
To all the people, winning reverence.
But now much honour and much fame were lost.”
110 So spake he, clouded with his own conceit,
And hid Excalibur the second time,
And so strode back slow to the wounded King.

Then spoke King Arthur, breathing heavily :
“What is it thou hast seen? or what hast heard?”

And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere :
“I heard the water lapping on the crag,
And the long ripple washing in the reeds.”

To whom replied King Arthur, much in wrath :
“Ah, miserable and unkind, untrue,
120 Unknightly, traitor-hearted! Woe is me!

Authority forgets a dying king,
Laid widow'd of the power in his eye
That bow'd the will. I see thee what thou art,
For thou, the latest-left of all my knights,
In whom should meet the offices of all,
Thou wouldst betray me for the precious hilt;
Either from lust of gold, or like a girl
Valuing the giddy pleasure of the eyes.
Yet, for a man may fail in duty twice,
And the third time may prosper, get thee hence : 130
But if thou spare to fling Excalibur,
I will arise and slay thee with my hands."

Then quickly rose Sir Bedivere, and ran,
And, leaping down the ridges lightly, plunged
Among the bulrush-beds, and clutch'd the sword,
And strongly wheel'd and threw it. The great brand
Made lightnings in the splendour of the moon,
And flashing round and round, and whirl'd in an arch,
Shot like a streamer of the northern morn,
Seen where the moving isles of winter shock 140
By night, with noises of the northern sea.
So flash'd and fell the brand Excalibur :
But ere he dipt the surface, rose an arm
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
And caught him by the hilt, and brandish'd him
Three times, and drew him under in the mere.
And lightly went the other to the King.

Then spoke King Arthur, drawing thicker breath :
"Now see I by thine eyes that this is done.
Speak out : what is it thou hast heard or seen ?" 150
And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere :
"Sir King, I closed mine eyelids, lest the gems
Should blind my purpose, for I never saw,
Nor shall see, here or elsewhere, till I die,
Not tho' I live three lives of mortal men,
So great a miracle as yonder hilt.

Then with both hands I flung him, wheeling him;
But when I look'd again, behold an arm,
Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
160 That caught him by the hilt, and brandish'd him
Three times, and drew him under in the mere."
And answer made King Arthur, breathing hard:
"My end draws nigh; 'tis time that I were gone.
Make broad thy shoulders to receive my weight,
And bear me to the margin; yet I fear
My wound hath taken cold, and I shall die."

So saying, from the pavement he half rose,
Slowly, with pain, reclining on his arm,
And looking wistfully with wide blue eyes
170 As in a picture. Him Sir Bedivere
Remorsefully regarded thro' his tears,
And would have spoken, but he found not words,
Then took with care, and kneeling on one knee,
O'er both his shoulders drew the languid hands,
And rising bore him thro' the place of tombs.

But, as he walk'd, King Arthur panted hard
Like one that feels a nightmare on his bed
When all the house is mute. So sigh'd the King,
Muttering and murmuring at his ear, "Quick, quick!
180 I fear it is too late, and I shall die."
But the other swiftly strode from ridge to ridge,
Clothed with his breath, and looking, as he walk'd
Larger than human on the frozen hills.
He heard the deep behind him, and a cry
Before. His own thought drove him, like a goad.
Dry clash'd his harness in the icy caves
And barren chasms, and all to left and right
The bare black cliff clang'd round him, as he based
His feet on juts of slippery crag that rang
190 Sharp-smitten with the dint of armed heels—
And on a sudden, lo! the level lake,
And the long glories of the winter moon.

Then saw they how there hove a dusky barge,
Dark as a funeral scarf from stem to stern,
Beneath them; and descending they were ware
That all the decks were dense with stately forms
Black-stoled, black-hooded, like a dream—by these
Three Queens with crowns of gold—and from them
rose

A cry that shiver'd to the tingling stars,
And, as it were one voice, an agony 200
Of lamentation, like a wind, that shrills
All night in a waste land, where no one comes,
Or hath come, since the making of the world.

Then murmur'd Arthur, "Place me in the barge,"
And to the barge they came. There those three Queens
Put forth their hands, and took the King, and wept.
But she, that rose the tallest of them all
And fairest, laid his head upon her lap,
And loosed the shatter'd casque, and chafed his hands,
And call'd him by his name, complaining loud, 210
And dropping bitter tears against his brow
Striped with dark blood: for all his face was white
And colourless, and like the wither'd moon
Smote by the fresh beam of the springing east;
And all his greaves and cuisses dash'd with drops
Of onset; and the light and lustrous curls—
That made his forehead like a rising sun
High from the dais-throne—were parch'd with dust;
Or, clotted into points and hanging loose,
Mix'd with the knightly growth that fringed his lips. 220
So like a shatter'd column lay the King;
Not like that Arthur, who, with lance in rest,
From spur to plume a star of tournament,
Shot thro' the lists at Camelot, and charged
Before the eyes of ladies and of kings.

Then loudly cried the bold Sir Bedivere,
"Ah! my Lord Arthur, whither shall I go?"

Where shall I hide my forehead and my eyes?
For now I see the true old times are dead,
230 When every morning brought a noble chance,
And every chance brought out a noble knight.
Such times have not been since the light that led
The holy Elders with the gift of myrrh.
But now the whole ROUND TABLE is dissolved,
Which was an image of the mighty world;
And I, the last, go forth companionless,
And the days darken round me, and the years,
Among new men, strange faces, other minds."

And slowly answered Arthur from the barge:
240 "The old order changeth, yielding place to new,
And God fulfils Himself in many ways,
Lest one good custom should corrupt the world.
Comfort thyself: what comfort is in me?
I have lived my life, and that which I have done
May He within Himself make pure! but thou,
If thou shouldst never see my face again,
Pray for my soul. More things are wrought by
prayer

Than this world dreams of. Wherefore, let thy voice
Rise like a fountain for me night and day.
250 For what are men better than sheep or goats
That nourish a blind life within the brain,
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer
Both for themselves and those who call them friend?
For so the whole round earth is every way
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.
But now farewell. I am going a long way
With those thou seest—if indeed I go—
(For all my mind is clouded with a doubt)
To the island-valley of Avilion;
260 Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow,
Nor ever wind blows loudly; but it lies
Deep-meadow'd, happy, fair with orchard-lawns

And bowery hollows crown'd with summer sea,
Where I will heal me of my grievous wound."

So said he, and the barge with oar and sail
Moved from the brink, like some full-breasted swan,
That, fluting a wild carol ere her death,
Ruffles her pure cold plume, and takes the flood
With swarthy webs. Long stood Sir Bedivere
Revolving many memories, till the hull
Look'd one black dot against the verge of dawn,
And on the mere the wailing died away.

270

LORD TENNYSON, 1842

Songs from "The Princess"

I

THE splendour falls on castle walls
And snowy summits old in story :
The long light shakes across the lakes,
And the wild cataract leaps in glory.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O hark, O hear! how thin and clear,
And thinner, clearer, farther going!
O sweet and far from cliff and scar
The horns of Elfland faintly blowing!
Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying :
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

10

O love, they die in yon rich sky,
They faint on hill or field or river :
Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
And grow for ever and for ever.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying.

Come down, O maid, from yonder mountain height :
 20 What pleasure lives in height (the shepherd sang),
 In height and cold, the splendour of the hills ?
 But cease to move so near the Heavens, and cease
 To glide a sunbeam by the blasted Pine,
 To sit a star upon the sparkling spire ;
 And come, for Love is of the valley, come,
 For Love is of the valley, come thou down
 And find him ; by the happy threshold, he,
 Or hand in hand with Plenty in the maize,
 Or red with spirted purple of the vats,
 30 Or foxlike in the vine ; nor cares to walk
 With Death and Morning on the silver horns,
 Nor wilt thou snare him in the white ravine,
 Nor find him dropt upon the firths of ice,
 That huddling slant in furrow-cloven falls
 To roll the torrent out of dusky doors :
 But follow ; let the torrent dance thee down
 To find him in the valley ; let the wild
 Lean-headed Eagles yelp alone, and leave
 The monstrous ledges there to slope, and spill
 40 Their thousand wreaths of dangling water-smoke,
 That like a broken purpose waste in air :
 So waste not thou ; but come ; for all the vales
 Await thee ; azure pillars of the hearth
 Arise to thee ; the children call, and I
 Thy shepherd pipe, and sweet is every sound,
 Sweeter thy voice, but every sound is sweet ;
 Myriads of rivulets hurrying thro' the lawn,
 The moan of doves in immemorial elms,
 And murmuring of innumerable bees.

LORD TENNYSON, 1847

The Forsaken Merman

COME, dear children, let us away;
Down and away below.
Now my brothers call from the bay;
Now the great winds shoreward blow;
Now the salt tides seawards flow;
Now the wild white horses play,
Champ and chafe and toss in the spray.
Children dear, let us away.
This way, this way.

Call her once before you go. 10
Call once yet.
In a voice that she will know:
"Margaret! Margaret!"
Children's voices should be dear
(Call once more) to a mother's ear:
Children's voices, wild with pain.
Surely she will come again.
Call her once and come away.
This way, this way.
"Mother dear, we cannot stay." 20
The wild white horses foam and fret.
Margaret! Margaret!

Come, dear children, come away down.
Call no more.
One last look at the white wall'd town,
And the little grey church on the windy shore.
Then come down.
She will not come though you call all day.
Come away, come away.

Children dear, was it yesterday 30
We heard the sweet bells over the bay?
In the caverns where we lay,

Through the surf and through the swell,
The far-off sound of a silver bell?
Sand-strewn caverns, cool and deep,
Where the winds are all asleep;
Where the spent lights quiver and gleam;
Where the salt weed sways in the stream,
Where the sea-beasts rang'd all round
40 Feed in the ooze of their pasture-ground;
Where the sea-snakes coil and twine,
Dry their mail and bask in the brine;
Where great whales come sailing by,
Sail and sail, with unshut eye,
Round the world for ever and aye?
When did music come this way?
Children dear, was it yesterday?

Children dear, was it yesterday
(Call yet once) that she went away?
50 Once she sate with you and me,
On a red gold throne in the heart of the sea,
And the youngest sate on her knee.
She comb'd its bright hair, and she tended it well,
When down swung the sound of the far-off bell.
She sigh'd, she look'd up through the clear green sea.
She said: "I must go, for my kinsfolk pray
In the little grey church on the shore to-day.
'Twill be Easter-time in the world—ah me!
And I lose my poor soul, Merman, here with thee!"
60 I said: "Go up, dear heart, through the waves;
Say thy prayer, and come back to the kind sea-caves."
She smil'd, she went up through the surf in the bay.
Children dear, was it yesterday?

Children dear, were we long alone?
"The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan.
Long prayers," I said, "in the world they say;
Come!" I said, and we rose through the surf in the bay.

We went up the beach, by the sandy down
Where the sea-stocks bloom, to the white-wall'd town.
Through the narrow pav'd streets, where all was still, 70
To the little grey church on the windy hill.

From the church came a murmur of folk at their
prayers,

But we stood without in the cold blowing airs.
We climb'd on the graves, on the stones, worn with
rains,

And we gaz'd up the aisle through the small leaded
panes.

She sate by the pillar; we saw her clear :

"Margaret, hist! come quick, we are here.

Dear heart," I said, "we are long alone.

The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan."

But, ah, she gave me never a look, 80

For her eyes were seal'd to the holy book.

Loud prays the priest; shut stands the door.

Come away, children, call no more.

Come away, come down, call no more.

Down, down, down.

Down to the depths of the sea.

She sits at her wheel in the humming town,
Singing most joyfully.

Hark, what she sings; "O joy, O joy,

For the humming street, and the child with its toy. 90

For the priest, and the bell, and the holy well.

For the wheel where I spun,

And the blessed light of the sun!"

And so she sings her fill,

Singing most joyfully,

Till the shuttle falls from her hand,

And the whizzing wheel stands still.

She steals to the window, and looks at the sand;

And over the sand at the sea;

And her eyes are set in a stare; 100

And anon there breaks a sigh,
And anon there drops a tear,
From a sorrow-clouded eye,
And a heart sorrow-laden,
A long, long sigh,
For the cold strange eyes of a little Mermaid,
And the gleam of her golden hair.

110 Come away, away, children.
Come, children, come down.
The hoarse wind blows colder;
Lights shine in the town.
She will start from her slumber
When gusts shake the door;
She will hear the winds howling,
Will hear the waves roar.
We shall see, while above us
The waves roar and whirl,
A ceiling of amber,
A pavement of pearl.
120 Singing, "Here came a mortal,
But faithless was she.
And alone dwell for ever
The kings of the sea."

130 But, children, at midnight,
When soft the winds blow;
When clear falls the moonlight;
When spring-tides are low:
When sweet airs come seaward
From heaths starr'd with broom;
And high rocks throw mildly
On the blanch'd sands a gloom:
Up the still, glistening beaches,
Up the creeks we will hie,
Over banks of bright seaweed
The ebb-tide leaves dry.

We will gaze, from the sand-hills,
 At the white, sleeping town;
 At the church on the hill-side—
 And then come back down.
 Singing: "There dwells a lov'd one,
 But cruel is she.
 She left lonely for ever
 The kings of the sea."

140

MATTHEW ARNOLD, 1849

Sonnet

Shakespeare

OTHERS abide our question. Thou art free.
 We ask and ask: Thou smilest and art still,
 Out-topping knowledge. For the loftiest hill
 That to the stars uncrowns his majesty,
 Planting his steadfast footsteps in the sea,
 Making the Heaven of Heavens his dwelling-place,
 Spares but the cloudy border of his base
 To the foil'd searching of mortality:
 And thou, who didst the stars and sunbeams know,
 Self-school'd, self-scann'd, self-honour'd, self-secure, 10
 Didst walk on Earth unguess'd at. Better so!
 All pains the immortal spirit must endure,
 All weakness that impairs, all griefs that bow,
 Find their sole voice in that victorious brow.

MATTHEW ARNOLD, 1849

From "Pippa Passes"

Prologue

New Year's Day at Asolo in the Trevisan. A large, mean, airy chamber. A girl, PIPPA, from the silk-mills, springing out of bed.

DAY!

Faster and more fast,
O'er night's brim, day boils at last;
Boils, pure gold, o'er the cloud-cup's brim
Where spurting and supprest it lay—
For not a froth-flake touched the rim
Of yonder gap in the solid gray
Of the eastern cloud, an hour away;
But forth one wavelet, then another, curled,
10 Till the whole sunrise, not to be supprest,
Rose, reddened, and its seething breast
Flickered in bounds, grew gold, then overflowed the
world.

Oh, Day, if I squander a wavelet of thee,
A mite of my twelve hours' treasure,
The least of thy gazes or glances,
(Be they grants thou art bound to, or gifts above
measure)

One of thy choices or one of thy chances,
(Be they tasks God imposed thee, or freaks at thy
pleasure)

—My Day, if I squander such labour or leisure,
20 Then shame fall on Asolo, mischief on me!
Thy long blue solemn hours serenely flowing,
Whence earth, we feel, gets steady help and good—
Thy fitful sunshine-minutes, coming, going,
As if earth turned from work in gamesome mood—
All shall be mine! But thou must treat me not
As the prosperous are treated, those who live
At hand here, and enjoy the higher lot,

In readiness to take what thou wilt give,
 And free to let alone what thou refusest;
 For, Day, my holiday, if thou ill-usest 30
 Me, who am only Pippa,—old year's sorrow,
 Cast off last night, will come again to-morrow—
 Whereas, if thou prove gentle, I shall borrow
 Sufficient strength of thee for new-year's sorrow.
 All other men and women that this earth
 Belongs to, who all days alike possess,
 Make general plenty cure particular dearth,
 Get more joy, one way, if another, less :
 Thou art my single day, God lends to leaven
 What were all earth else, with a feel of heaven, 40
 Sole light that helps me through the year, thy sun's !
 Try, now ! Take Asolo's Four Happiest Ones—
 And let thy morning rain on that superb
 Great haughty Ottima ; can rain disturb
 Her Sebald's homage ? All the while thy rain
 Beats fiercest on her shrub-house window-pane,
 He will but press the closer, breathe more warm
 Against her cheek ; how should she mind the storm ?
 And, morning past, if mid-day shed a gloom
 O'er Jules and Phene,—what care bride and groom 50
 Save for their dear selves ? 'Tis their marriage-day ;
 And while they leave the church, and go home their
 way,
 Hand clasping hand,—within each breast would be
 Sunbeams and pleasant weather spite of thee !
 Then, for another trial, obscure thy eve
 With mist,—will Luigi and his mother grieve—
 The Lady and her child, unmatched, forsooth,
 She in her age, as Luigi in his youth,
 For true content ? The cheerful town, warm, close,
 And safe, the sooner that thou art morose, 60
 Receives them ! And yet once again, outbreak
 In storm at night on Monsignor, they make
 Such stir about,—whom they expect from Rome

To visit Asolo, his brother's home,
 And say here masses proper to release
 A soul from pain,—what storm dares hurt his peace?
 Calm would he pray, with his own thoughts toward
 Thy thunder off, nor want the angels' guard!
 But Pippa—just one such mischance would spoil
 70 Her day that lightens the next twelvemonth's toil
 At wearisome silk-winding, coil on coil!
 And here I let time slip for nought!
 Aha, you foolhardy sunbeam—caught
 With a single splash from my ewer!
 You that would mock the best pursuer,
 Was my basin over-deep?
 One splash of water ruins you asleep,
 And up, up, fleet your brilliant bits
 Wheeling and counterwheeling,
 80 Reeling, broken beyond healing—
 Now grow together on the ceiling!
 That will task your wits!
 Whoever quenched fire first, hoped to see
 Morsel after morsel flee
 As merrily, as giddily . . .
 Meantime, what lights my sunbeam on,
 Where settles by degrees the radiant cripple?
 Oh, is it surely blown, my martagon?
 New-blown and ruddy as St Agnes' nipple,
 90 Plump as the flesh-bunch on some Turk bird's poll!
 Be sure if corals, branching 'neath the ripple
 Of ocean, bud there,—fairies watch unroll
 Such turban-flowers; I say, such lamps disperse
 Thick red flame through that dusk green universe!
 I am queen of thee, floweret;
 And each fleshy blossom
 Preserve I not—(safer
 Than leaves that embower it,
 Or shells that embosom)
 100 —From weevil and chafer?

Laugh through my pane, then ; solicit the bee ;
Gibe him, be sure ; and, in midst of thy glee,
Love thy queen, worship me !

—Worship whom else ? For am I not, this day,
Whate'er I please ? What shall I please to-day ?
My morning, noon, eve, night—how spend my day ?
To-morrow I must be Pippa who winds silk,
The whole year round, to earn just bread and milk :
But this one day, I have leave to go,
And play out my fancy's fullest games ;
I may fancy all day—and it shall be so—
That I taste of the pleasures, am called by the
names

110

Of the Happiest Four in our Asolo !

See ! Up the Hill-side yonder, through the morning,
Some one shall love me, as the world calls love :
I am no less than Ottima, take warning !
The gardens, and the great stone house above,
And other house for shrubs, all glass in front,
Are mine ; where Sebald steals, as he is wont,
To court me, while old Luca yet reposes ;
And therefore, till the shrub-house door uncloses,
I . . . what, now ?—give abundant cause for prate
About me—Ottima, I mean—of late,
Too bold, too confident she'll still face down
The spitefullest of talkers in our town—
How we talk in the little town below !

120

But love, love, love—there's better love, I know !
This foolish love was only day's first offer ;
I choose my next love to defy the scoffer :
For do not our Bride and Bridegroom sally
Out of Possagno church at noon ?
Their house looks over Orcana valley—
Why should I not be the bride as soon
As Ottima ? For I saw, beside,

130

Arrive last night that little bride—
 Saw, if you call it seeing her, one flash
 Of the pale, snow-pure cheek and black bright tresses,
 Blacker than all except the black eyelash;
 I wonder she contrives those lids no dresses!
 140 —So strict was she, the veil
 Should cover close her pale
 Pure cheeks—a bride to look at and scarce touch,
 Scarce touch, remember, Jules!—for are not such
 Used to be tended, flower-like, every feature,
 As if one's breath would fray the lily of a creature?
 A soft and easy life these ladies lead!
 Whiteness in us were wonderful indeed.
 Oh, save that brow its virgin dimness,
 Keep that foot its lady primness,
 150 Let those ankles never swerve
 From their exquisite reserve,
 Yet have to trip along the streets like me,
 All but naked to the knee!
 How will she ever grant her Jules a bliss
 So startling as her real first infant kiss?
 Oh, no—not envy, this!
 —Not envy, sure!—for if you gave me
 Leave to take or to refuse,
 In earnest, do you think I'd choose
 160 That sort of new love to enslave me?
 Mine should have lapped me round from the begin-
 ning;
 As little fear of losing it as winning!
 Lovers grow cold, men learn to hate their wives,
 And only parents' love can last our lives.
 At eve the son and mother, gentle pair,
 Commune inside our Turret; what prevents
 My being Luigi? while that mossy lair
 Of lizards through the winter-time, is stirred
 With each to each imparting sweet intents
 170 For this new-year, as brooding bird to bird—

(For I observe of late, the evening walk
Of Luigi and his mother, always ends
Inside our ruined turret, where they talk,
Calmer than lovers, yet more kind than friends)
—Let me be cared about, kept out of harm,
And schemed for, safe in love as with a charm;
Let me be Luigi! If I only knew
What was my mother's face—my father, too!
Nay, if you come to that, best love of all
Is God's; then why not have God's love befall
Myself as, in the Palace by the Dome,
Monsignor?—who to-night will bless the home
Of his dead brother; and God will bless in turn
That heart which beats, those eyes which mildly burn
With love for all men: I, to-night at least,
Would be that holy and beloved priest!
Now wait!—even I already seem to share
In God's love: what does New-year's hymn declare?
What other meaning do these verses bear?

180

All service ranks the same with God:
If now, as formerly He trod
Paradise, His presence fills
Our earth, each only as God wills
Can work—God's puppets, best and worst,
Are we; there is no last nor first.

190

Say not "a small event"! Why "small"?
Costs it more pain than this, ye call
A "great event," should come to pass,
Than that? Untwine me from the mass
Of deeds which make up life, one deed
Power shall fall short in, or exceed!

200

And more of it, and more of it!—oh, yes—
I will pass by, and see their happiness,
And envy none—being just as great, no doubt,

Useful to men, and dear to God, as they!
A pretty thing to care about
So mightily, this single holiday!

210 But let the sun shine! Wherefore repine?
—With thee to lead me, O Day of mine,
Down the grass-path grey with dew,
Under the pine-wood, blind with boughs,
Where the swallow never flew
As yet, nor cicala dared carouse—
Dared carouse!

[She enters the street.]

Pippa's Songs

I

220 The year's at the spring,
And day's at the morn;
Morning's at seven;
The hill-side's dew-pearled;
The lark's on the wing;
The snail's on the thorn;
God's in His heaven—
All's right with the world!

II

230 Give her but a least excuse to love me!
When—where—
How—can this arm establish her above me,
If fortune fixed her as my lady there,
There already, to eternally reprove me?
("Hist"—said Kate the queen;
But "Oh"—cried the maiden, binding her tresses,
"'Tis only a page that carols unseen
Crumbling your hounds their messes!")

Is she wronged?—To the rescue of her honour,
 My heart!
 Is she poor?—What costs it to be styled a donor?
 Merely an earth's to cleave, a sea's to part!
 But that fortune should have thrust all this upon her!
 ("Nay, list!"—bade Kate the queen;
 And still cried the maiden, binding her tresses,
 "'Tis only a page that carols unseen,
 Fitting your hawks their jesses!")

240

III

The bee with his comb,
 The mouse at her dray,
 The grub in his tomb,
 Wile winter away;
 But the fire-fly and hedge-shrew and lob-worm, I pray,
 How fare they?
 Ha, ha, best thanks for your counsel, my Zanze—
 "Feast upon lampreys, quaff the Breganze"—
 The summer of life's so easy to spend,
 And care for to-morrow so soon put away!
 But winter hastens at summer's end,
 And fire-fly, hedge-shrew, lob-worm, pray,
 How fare they?

250

ROBERT BROWNING, 1841

Love among the Ruins

WHERE the quiet-coloured end of evening smiles
 Miles and miles
 On the solitary pastures where our sheep
 Half-asleep
 Tinkle homeward thro' the twilight, stray or stop
 As they crop—
 Was the site once of a city great and gay,
 (So they say)

Of our country's very capital, its prince
10 Ages since
Held his court in, gathered councils, wielding far
Peace or war.

Now—the country does not even boast a tree,
As you see,
To distinguish slopes of verdure, certain rills
From the hills
Intersect and give a name to, (else they run
Into one)

Where the domed and daring palace shot its spires
20 Up like fires
O'er the hundred-gated circuit of a wall
Bounding all,
Made of marble, men might march on nor be prest,
Twelve abreast.

And such plenty and perfection, see, of grass
Never was!
Such a carpet as, this summer-time, o'erspreads
And embeds
Every vestige of the city, guessed alone,
30 Stock or stone—

Where a multitude of men breathed joy and woe
Long ago;
Lust of glory pricked their hearts up, dread of shame
Struck them tame;
And that glory and that shame alike, the gold
Bought and sold.

Now,—the single little turret that remains
On the plains,
By the caper overrooted, by the gourd
40 Overscored,

While the patching houseleek's head of blossom winks
Through the chinks—

Marks the basement whence a tower in ancient time
Sprang sublime,
And a burning ring, all round, the chariots traced
As they raced,
And the monarch and his minions and his dames
Viewed the games.

And I know, while thus the quiet-coloured eve
Smiles to leave
To their folding, all our many-tinkling fleece
In such peace,
And the slopes and rills in undistinguished grey
Melt away—

50

That a girl with eager eyes and yellow hair
Waits me there
In the turret whence the charioteers caught soul
For the goal,
When the king looked, where she looks now, breath-
less, dumb,
Till I come.

60

But he looked upon the city, every side,
Far and wide,
All the mountains topped with temples, all the glades'
Colonnades,
All the causeys, bridges, aqueducts,—and then,
All the men!

When I do come, she will speak not, she will stand,
Either hand
On my shoulder, give her eyes the first embrace
Of my face,
Ere we rush, ere we extinguish sight and speech
Each on each

70

In one year they sent a million fighters forth
South and North,
And they built their gods a brazen pillar high
As the sky,
Yet reserved a thousand chariots in full force—
Gold, of course.

80 Oh, heart! oh, blood that freezes, blood that burns!
Earth's returns
For whole centuries of folly, noise and sin!
Shut them in,
With their triumphs and their glories and the rest.
Love is best!

ROBERT BROWNING, 1855

From "The Two Poets of Croisic"

Lyric

SUCH a starved bank of moss
Till that May-morn,
Blue ran the flash across:
Violets were born!

Sky—what a scowl of cloud
Till, near and far,
Ray on ray split the shroud
Splendid, a star!

10 World—how it walled about
Life with disgrace
Till God's own smile came out:
That was thy face!

ROBERT BROWNING, 1878

From "Asolando"

Epilogue

AT the midnight in the silence of the sleep-time,
When you set your fancies free,
Will they pass to where—by death, fools think,
imprisoned—
Low he lies who once so loved you, whom you loved so,
—Pity me?

Oh to love so, be so loved, yet so mistaken!
What had I on earth to do
With the slothful, with the mawkish, the unmanly?
Like the aimless, helpless, hopeless, did I drivel
—Being—who?

10

One who never turned his back but marched breast
forward,
Never doubted clouds would break,
Never dreamed, though right were worsted, wrong
would triumph,
Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better,
Sleep to wake.

No, at noonday in the bustle of man's work-time
Greet the unseen with a cheer!
Bid him forward, breast and back as either should be,
"Strive and thrive!" cry "Speed,—fight on, fare ever
There as here!"

20

ROBERT BROWNING, 1889

NOTES

THE CANTERBURY TALES

- 8. *the Ram*, the first of the signs of the zodiac.
- 17. *martir*, Thomas à Becket.
- 29. *esed atte beste*, accommodated in first-class style. *atte*, at the.
- 51. *Alisaundre*, Alexandria, Egypt, besieged and captured 1365.
- 52. *the bord bigonne*, presided at the head of the table.
- 53. *Pruce*, Prussia.
- 54. *Lettow*, Lithuania. *Ruce*, Russia.
- 57. *Algezir*, a city in the Moorish kingdom of Granada. *Belmarye*, a Moorish kingdom in Northern Africa.
- 58. *Lyveys*, an Armenian city, modern Ayas, captured from the Turks in 1367 by Pierre de Lusignan. *Satalye*, Attalia, captured from the Turks about 1352.
- 59. *Grete See*, the Mediterranean.
- 62. *Tramyssene*, a Moorish kingdom in Northern Africa.
- 65. *Palatye*, in Anatolia, Asia Minor.
- 67. *sovereyn prys*, the highest renown.
- 109. To be genteel was her chief desire.
- 147. *Office*, employment of a non-religious kind.
- 148. *hym was levere*, he would rather.
- 152. *al be that*, although it be that, albeit.
- 157. Of those who gave him the means to keep himself at school.
- 161. *hy sentence*, elevating significance.
- 210. He employed no arts to curry favour with any man.
- 217. *Chepe*, Cheapside, London.
- 233. *quite yow . . .*, yield you your reward.
- 248. *to make it wys*, to make it a matter of deep consideration.

EARLY SONNETS

These sonnets are among the earliest examples of this verse-form in English literature. The sonnet had long been popular in Italy, and Sir Thomas Wyatt (1503?-42) and the Earl of Surrey (1517?-47) were the first to introduce it to English readers. The verses of these poets were not published in their own lifetimes, but first appeared in 1557 in an anthology, known from its publisher as *Tottel's Miscellany*. The volume included twenty sonnets by Wyatt and sixteen by Surrey, who in many instances directly translated Petrarch.

- 15. *soote*, sweet.
- 18. *make*, mate.
- 25. *mings*, mixes.

ASTROPHEL AND STELLA

In addition to the example set by Wyatt and Surrey, considerable impetus was given to English sonnet-writing from France, where, from about 1550 onward, Ronsard, Du Bellay, Desportes, and numerous other poets had established a vogue for this form of verse. These writers were very freely drawn upon by English poets. In *Astrophel and Stella*, a sequence of 108 sonnets, Sidney frequently translates or adapts Ronsard and Desportes, as well as Petrarch. A similar procedure was followed by the writers of most other sonnet sequences. The emotional content of such poems, therefore, is often more likely to be feigned than real. "Stella" is commonly supposed to be the Lady Penelope Devereux, to whom Sidney had once been betrothed.

Sidney's sonnets first appeared, in an unauthorized publication, in 1591.

THE SHEPHEARD'S CALENDER

- 28. *the shepherd*, Orpheus, who by his power in music rescued Eurydice from Pluto's realm.
- 30. *the hellish hound*, Cerberus, who guarded the entrance to the infernal regions.
- 32. *Argus*, said to have had a hundred eyes. While guarding Io for Juno he was slain by Mercury. Juno thereupon set his eyes in the tail-feathers of the peacock.
- 41. *woundlesse armour*, as a result of a period of peace.
- 45. *Elisa*, Queen Elizabeth.
- 47. *the worthy*, the Earl of Leicester.
- 49. *stronger stounds*, more vigorous moments, loftier efforts.
- 52. *Myllers rownde*, a kind of dance.
- 55. *Tityrus*, Virgil, the Roman poet, who, after having written his pastoral *Eclogues* and his *Georgics*, was induced by his patron Mæcenas and the Emperor Augustus to attempt a national theme. The result was the *Æneid*.
- 70. *To put in preace*, to press in, to crowd in, as competitors.
- 72. *pend*, penned up as in a coop.
- 78. *Tom Piper*, the average rustic performer.
- 87. *peeched*, patched up. His pinions are therefore too weak for lofty flights.
- 89. *ill bedight*, badly dealt with.
- 95. *caytive corage*, a lowly spirit.
- 105. *Let powre in . . .*, let him eat and drink generously.
- 113. *in buskin fine*, in a tragic rôle.

AMORETTI

In *Amoretti*, a sequence of 88 sonnets, Spenser records the passionate history of his wooing of Elizabeth Boyle, of Kilcoran, near Youghal, Ireland. Up to the sixtieth sonnet his case appears to be a hopeless one; but at that point his prospects

brighten, and he wins his heart's desire. The record extends from toward the end of 1592 over the year 1593. The wedding took place in June of the following year, an event made memorable for all time in the poet's magnificent *Epithalamion*.

EPITHALAMION

- 68. *to towre*, to ascend to lofty heights.
- 75. *The Rosy Morne*, Aurora, beloved of Tithonus, to whom the gods gave immortality, but not eternal youth.
- 81. *Mavis*, the throstle, or song-thrush.
- 82. *Ouzell*, the blackbird. *Ruddock*, the robin.
- 190. *Medusæ*, Medusa, one of the Gorgons, whose head had the power of turning those who looked upon it into stone.
- 239. *band*, their mutual bond.
- 263. *This day*, St Barnabas' Day. Spenser was married on June 11 (old style), 1594.
- 269. *the Crab*, the constellation Cancer.

TAMBURLAINE

- 1-2. Marlowe here declares his contempt for rhyming verse and comic interludes, such as were common to the plays of his time, and, boldly adopting blank verse as his medium—the first genuine blank verse in English drama—attacks his theme vigorously, and sustains it without any attempt to seek favour in the guffaws of the groundlings.
- 9. Tamburlaine here addresses Theridamas, a Persian nobleman, sent by the King of Persia to destroy Tamburlaine's forces. Tamburlaine, however, succeeds in inducing him to join with him in a career of conquest.
- 30. *this soldan's daughter*, Zenocrate, daughter of the Soldan of Egypt, who has been captured by Tamburlaine and eventually becomes his queen.
- 43. Tamburlaine was originally a Tartar shepherd.
- 50. *Boreas*, the north wind.
- 51. *Bootes*, a northern constellation.
- 54. Tamburlaine enters in state, followed by two Moors drawing Bajazeth, the captured Emperor of the Turks, in a cage. Bajazeth is brought forth and compelled to kneel, and upon him as a foot-stool Tamburlaine ascends to his seat and delivers this address.
- 73. *Clymene's son*, Prometheus, who stole fire from the chariot of the sun and brought it down to earth.
- 80. Damascus is here besieged. Four virgins have pleaded that the city be spared. The Soldan of Egypt, father of Zenocrate, is conducting the defence of the city. Zenocrate has supported the plea of the virgins, and here Tamburlaine replies to her gentle and humane intercession.

SHAKESPEAREAN SONNETS

The decade following the publication of Sidney's *Astrophel and Stella* in 1591 was the most productive period of sonnet-writing in England's literary history. It is agreed that most of Shakespeare's sonnets were composed within this period—according to Sir Sidney Lee, most of them in 1594. After circulating in manuscript form they were published in a pirated edition in 1609.

A FAIRY QUARREL

- 32. *pelting*, insignificant, paltry.
- 33. *continents*, the banks of the stream.
- 38. *murrion flock*, the beasts which have died of cattle-plague.
- 39. *nine men's morris*, the ground upon which the game was played. It consisted of three concentric squares cut in the turf. Each player had nine counters, the object of the game being, by alternate moves, to get three in a row.
- 53. *childing*, fruitful, productive.
- 97. *fair vestal*, a complimentary reference to Queen Elizabeth.

L'ALLEGRO

- 5. *Hebe* daughter of Jupiter and Juno. Cupbearer of the gods.
- 38. *dight*, adorned.
- 56. *cynosure*, originally the constellation containing the Pole Star, to which the eyes of mariners were constantly turned. Hence, a special centre of attraction.
- 70. *rebecks*, stringed instruments of the violin type.
- 108. *sock*, the light leather boot worn by comic actors. Hence the line means "If one of Jonson's comedies is being acted."

LYCIDAS

- 1. *Yet once more*, Milton's mother had died in April 1637, and Edward King, whose death this elegy laments, was drowned in August of the same year, while crossing from Chester to Ireland.
- 23. *the self-same hill*, Christ's College, Cambridge.
- 54. *Mona*, the island of Anglesea.
- 55. *Deva*, the river Dee.
- 61. *the rout*, the maddened Mænads, female worshippers of Bacchus, by whom Orpheus was torn in pieces.
- 85. *Arethuse*, in Sicily, the home of Theocritus, the finest of the Greek pastoral poets.
- 86. *Mincius*, the river in Northern Italy on which stands Mantua, near which town Virgil was born. Virgil modelled his pastoral poems upon those of Theocritus, and Milton draws inspiration from both.
- 96. *Hippotades*, the god of the winds.

103. *Camus*, the guardian deity of the river Cam, which flows through Cambridge.
106. *sanguine flower*, the hyacinth, so named from the Greek youth Hyacinthus, accidentally killed by Apollo, who thereupon changed his blood into a flower. The markings of the flower were supposed to represent *ai*, a cry of woe.
109. *The Pilot of the Galilean Lake*, St Peter, to whom Christ entrusted the keys of heaven.
124. *scrannel*, lean, poor.
128. *the grim wolf*, the Church of Rome.
- 130-131. "In these lines our author anticipates the execution of Archbishop Laud by a 'two-handed engine,' that is, the axe. Dr Warburton supposes that St Peter's sword, turned into the two-handed sword of romance, is here intended. But this supposition only embarrasses the passage."—WARTON.
132. *Alpheus*, an Arcadian river-god, said to have pursued Arethusa to Sicily. Here used, with "Sicilian Muse," to suggest Arcadia and Sicily as the homes of pastoral poetry.
160. *Bellerus*, the spirit of Bellerium, or Land's End.
161. *the great Vision*. There is a legend that the Archangel Michael appeared at Mount St Michael, in Cornwall, a rock which faces toward Namancos and Bayona, near Finisterre, in Spain.

ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL

The poem *Absalom and Achitophel* is a satire dealing with the political controversies centring round the Popish Plot and the Exclusion Bill of the reign of Charles II. The heads of the opposing parties were the Duke of Monmouth (Absalom) and the Duke of York, afterwards James II. Dryden's attack is directed principally against Monmouth's chief supporter, the Earl of Shaftesbury—Achitophel. Shaftesbury was again assailed by a second satire, *The Medal*, in the following year, 1682.

24. *the triple bond*, the Triple Alliance between England, Holland, and Sweden (1668) was annulled by a new treaty with France in 1670, by which Charles agreed to the establishment of the Roman Catholic religion in England.
38. *Zimri*, the Duke of Buckingham. Ten years earlier he had produced a farce, *The Rehearsal*, in which Dryden had been held up to ridicule. In this satiric portrait Dryden balances the account.

MAC FLECKNOE

The subject of the satire in this poem was Thomas Shadwell, an unsuccessful poet and an undaunted dramatist responsible for seventeen plays. He had been on friendly terms with Dryden, but in politics he chose that party which Dryden undertook to assail. On the appearance of Dryden's attack on Shaftesbury,

The Medal, Shadwell was venturesome enough to write a satirical reply, entitled *The Medal of John Bayes*, aimed directly at Dryden. The answer to this was *Mac Flecknoe*.

3. *Flecknoe*, Richard Flecknoe, an Irishman by birth, a poetaster and dramatist of the early Restoration period, none of whose works have survived. Flecknoe had died a few years before the appearance of Dryden's satire.
29. *Heywood*, Thomas Heywood, an actor and playwright of the early seventeenth century. He claimed to have written, wholly or in part, no fewer than 220 plays. *Shirley*, James Shirley (1596–1666), the author of forty-two plays.
33. *drugget*, an inferior kind of coarse woollen cloth.
36. Flecknoe had lived in Portugal before settling in London.
42. *Epsom blanket*. One of Shadwell's plays is entitled *Epsom Wells*; and in another, *The Sullen Lovers*, a lady of quality recommends that a certain individual be "tossed in a blanket." Dryden here ridicules the expression, but associates it with the wrong play.
45. *St André*, a popular teacher of dancing of Dryden's time.
46. *Psyche*. One of Shadwell's operas. In his preface Shadwell declares "that the great design is to entertain the town with a variety of music, curious dancing, splendid scenes, and machines."
51. *Villierius*, chief character in D'Avenant's opera *The Siege of Rhodes*, a part in which the actor Singleton excelled.
62. *Ogleby*, an inferior poet, responsible for several epics.
65. *Herringman*, one of the principal publishers of the period.
82. *Love's Kingdom*, a play of Shadwell's, regarded by Dryden as a contemptible production.
100. *Virtuosos*, the reference is to Shadwell's comedy *The Virtuoso*.
102. *gentle George*, Sir George Etherege, the dramatist. The names mentioned in the next two lines are those of characters in his *Man of Mode* and *Comical Revenge*.
114. *Sedley*, Sir Charles Sedley, who was said to have collaborated with Shadwell in the production of *Epsom Wells*.
119. *Sir Formal*, a character in *The Virtuoso*, who adopts an inflated style of expression.
121. *northern dedications*, Shadwell dedicated several of his works to the Duke and Duchess of Newcastle.
123. *Jonson*, Ben Jonson, whose personal style and literary methods Shadwell endeavoured to imitate.
138. *bias*, the reference is to a passage in the epilogue to *The Humorists*, by Shadwell, in which the author extends elaborate praise to Jonson.

A humour is the bias of the mind,
By which with violence 'tis one way inclined;
It makes our actions lean on one side still,
And in all changes that way bends the will.

143. *tympany*, literally a kettle-drum. Hence, a distended emptiness, possessing none of the solid qualities of 'sense.'
145. *kilderkin*, a small barrel, 18 gallons (a tun = 252 gallons).

151. *Irish pen*, a taunt of Dryden's. Shadwell in reality was an Englishman, born in Norfolk.
161. *Bruce and Longvil*, characters in Shadwell's play *The Virtuoso*, who employ the device of a trap-door to rid themselves of Sir Formal.

THE RAPE OF THE LOCK

In this poem Pope employs his art upon a set of more or less trifling circumstances which he treats as of heroic dimension. A lock of hair had been snipped by Lord Petre from the head of Miss Arabella Fermor, a maid of honour at Queen Anne's Court. A quarrel ensued, which became the talk of the town. Pope's happy intervention allayed the storm, and provided literature with the best example of his poetic art.

151. *ombre*, a card game resembling solo whist. It is of Spanish origin, and derives its name from the Spanish *l'hombre*, 'the man'—i.e., the one player who opposes the other two in the game. Belinda here is the ombre. Each player is dealt nine cards.
157. *Matadore*, the three cards of highest value are called matadores. Of these, two retain their value whatever is trumps—Spadillio, the ace of spades, being first in power, and Basto, the ace of clubs, being third. The other matadore, called Manillio, varies according to trumps. When a black suit is trumps Manillio is the two of that suit; when a red suit Manillio is the seven of trumps.
185. *Pam*, the knave of clubs, the highest card in loo.
216. *Codille*. The ombre must take more tricks than either of his opponents, otherwise he loses. The winner takes the pool. If the ombre loses, he has to replace the pool. This "ruin" is called "codille."
234. *fragrant steams*, Belinda is here engaged in preparing coffee.
247. *forfex*, a pair of scissors.
268. *Hampton-Court*, the scene of the rape of the lock.
361. *Rome's great founder*, Romulus, who, after ruling for nearly forty years, was said to have been translated to heaven. After vanishing he appeared only to Julius Proculus, to whom he prophesied that Rome should rule the earth.
365. *Berenice*, Queen of Ptolemy III, who hung up a lock of her hair in the temple of the war-god, in obedience to a vow. The hair disappeared, and was said to have been carried up to the heavens and transformed into a constellation.
372. *Rosamonda's lake*, situated at the south-west corner of St James's Park. It was filled up in 1770.
373. *Partridge*, an astrologer of Pope's day, who issued almanacs every year in which he foretold various important happenings, such as the downfall of the Pope and the death of Louis XIV, predictions, however, which failed to be fulfilled.

THE SEASONS

James Thomson so far breaks away from the Augustan tradition as to write in blank verse instead of the closed couplet, and in an age when 'town poetry' is the fashion turns to nature and to rural life for his themes. The conventional diction of the period, which Wordsworth condemned, is illustrated in his work, as also are other qualities, both artificial and superficial. It will prove instructive to consider Thomson's attitude toward nature in conjunction with those of Wordsworth, Byron, and Keats.

ON THE DEATH OF RICHARD WEST

In his revolt against conventional poetic diction Wordsworth singled out this poem for comment.

It would be a most easy task to prove . . . that not only the language of a large portion of every good poem, even of the most elevated character, must necessarily, except with reference to the metre, in no respect differ from that of good prose, but likewise that some of the most interesting parts of the best poems will be found to be strictly the language of prose when prose is well written. The truth of this assertion might be demonstrated by innumerable passages from almost all the poetical writings, even of Milton himself. To illustrate the subject in a general manner, I will here adduce a short composition of Gray, who was at the head of those who, by their reasonings, have attempted to widen the space of separation betwixt Prose and Metrical composition, and was more than any other man curiously elaborate in the structure of his own poetic diction. [The sonnet is here quoted in full.] It will easily be perceived, that the only part of this sonnet which is of any value is the lines printed in italics [lines 6, 7, 8, and 13, 14]; it is equally obvious that, except in the rhyme, and in the use of the single word 'fruitless' for 'fruitlessly,' which is so far a defect, the language of these lines does in no respect differ from that of prose.—Preface to *Lyrical Ballads*.

THE PROGRESS OF POESY

1. *Æolian lyre*, a stringed instrument which yielded music when breathed upon by the wind. Æolus was the god of winds. The early Greek lyric poetry was written in the Æolic dialect. Pindar used it in many of his poems. Æolis was a Greek colony in Asia Minor. Pindar refers to his own poetry as "Æolian song" and "Æolian strings."
3. *Helicon*, a mountain favoured by the Muses, situated in Bœotia. From it flowed the "harmonious springs" Aganippe and Hippocrene.
9. *Ceres*, goddess of corn and harvests.
15. *Enchanting shell*, the lyre, so called from the legend that the earliest lyre was made by stretching strings across the shell of a tortoise.
17. *the Lord of War*. In Greek mythology Ares was the god of war; his home was in Thrace.
21. *the feather'd king*, the eagle, which was sacred to Jupiter.

- 27. *Idalia*, in the island of Cyprus, a place sacred to Venus.
- 29. *Cytherea*, Venus, who was said to have been cast up from the foam of the sea upon the island of Cythera.
- 53. *Hyperion*, the son of Earth and Heaven and father of the sun. Here used, however, for the sun itself.
- 66. *Delphi*, north of the Gulf of Corinth, the chief centre of the worship of Apollo, the god of music, poetry, etc.
- 68. *Ilissus*, the river upon which Athens is built. Associated with Greek tragedy.
- 69. *Mæander*, a river which flows by the site of ancient Troy. Hence associated with Homeric legend.
- 84. *Nature's Darling*, Shakespeare.
- 95. *Nor second He*, Milton.
- 105. *Two coursers*, referring to the heroic couplet so extensively employed by Dryden.
- 112. *daring Spirit*, Gray himself.
- 115. *Theban Eagle*, Pindar, who lived in Thebes, the chief city of Bœotia, north of Corinth.

THE DESERTED VILLAGE

Writing in an age when a new spirit was already making itself felt in English literature, Goldsmith, like Dr Johnson, remained a firm admirer of the Pope school, and maintained the conviction that their writings provided the best models for imitation. Hence in his work will be found something of the conventional diction, the rhetorical elevation, and the didacticism of the Augustans. Also, he adheres to the closed couplet as his verse-form. Nevertheless, his democratic outlook, his humanity, sympathy, humour, and pathos, and other personal influences in his work mark a change in the tone and temper of the poetry of the time.

KUBLA KHAN

Coleridge gives the following account of the origin of this magnificent fragment:

In the summer of the year 1797 the author, then in ill health, had retired to a lonely farmhouse between Porlock and Linton, on the Exmoor confines of Somerset and Devonshire. In consequence of a slight indisposition, an anodyne had been prescribed, from the effects of which he fell asleep in his chair at the moment that he was reading the following sentence, or words of the same substance, in *Purchas' Pilgrimage*: "Here the Khan Kubla commanded a palace to be built, and a stately garden thereunto. And thus ten miles of fertile ground were inclosed with a wall." The author continued for about three hours in a profound sleep, at least of the external senses, during which time he has the most vivid confidence that he could not have composed less than from two to three hundred lines; if that indeed can be called composition in which all the images rose up before him as *things*, with a parallel production of the correspondent expressions, without any sensation or consciousness of effort. On awaking he appeared to himself to have a distinct recollection of the whole, and taking his pen, ink, and paper, instantly and eagerly wrote down the

lines that are here preserved. At this moment he was unfortunately called out by a person on business from Porlock, and detained by him above an hour, and on his return to his room, found to his no small surprise and mortification, that though he still retained some vague and dim recollection of the general purpose of the vision, yet, with the exception of some eight or ten scattered lines and images, all the rest had passed away like the images on the surface of a stream into which a stone has been cast, but, alas! without the after restoration of the latter.

CHRISTABEL

Though written in 1797, this poem was not published till 1816. It was never completed. As a type of romantic poetry it holds high place. The poem sprang from the same impulse as produced *The Ancient Mariner*. Coleridge himself in his *Biographia Literaria* gives us the following details in connexion with these poems:

During the first year that Mr Wordsworth and I were neighbours, our conversations turned frequently on the two cardinal points of poetry, the power of exciting the sympathy of the reader by a faithful adherence to the truth of nature, and the power of giving the interest of novelty by the modifying colours of imagination. The sudden charm, which accidents of light and shade, which moonlight or sunset diffused over a known and familiar landscape, appeared to represent the practicability of combining both. These are the poetry of nature. The thought suggested itself—(to which of us I do not recollect)—that a series of poems might be composed of two sorts. In the one, the incidents and agents were to be, in part at least, supernatural; and the excellence aimed at was to consist in the interesting of the affections by the dramatic truth of such emotions, as would naturally accompany such situations, supposing them real. And real in this sense they have been to every human being who, from whatever source of delusion, has at any time believed himself under supernatural agency. For the second class, subjects were to be chosen from ordinary life; the characters and incidents were to be such as will be found in every village and its vicinity, where there is a meditative and feeling mind to seek after them, or to notice them, when they present themselves.

In this idea originated the plan of the *Lyrical Ballads*; in which it was agreed, that my endeavours should be directed to persons and characters supernatural, or at least romantic; yet so as to transfer from our inward nature a human interest and a semblance of truth sufficient to procure for these shadows of imagination that willing suspension of disbelief for the moment, which constitutes poetic faith. Mr Wordsworth, on the other hand, was to propose to himself as his object, to give the charm of novelty to things of every day, and to excite a feeling analogous to the supernatural, by awakening the mind's attention to the lethargy of custom, and directing it to the loveliness and the wonders of the world before us; an inexhaustible treasure, but for which, in consequence of the film of familiarity and selfish solicitude, we have eyes, yet see not, ears that hear not, and hearts that neither feel nor understand.

TINTERN ABBEY

This poem was included in *Lyrical Ballads*, which Wordsworth and Coleridge produced in 1798.

Wordsworth views nature, not with the appraising eye of an

external observer, but with an understanding sympathy, interpreting a spiritual experience. To him nature presents not merely an appearance or a beauty, but principally an inarticulate presence, which when admitted to communion with the spirit yields to the spirit sustaining elements of truth, beauty, and moral energy, such as life is ennobled and enriched upon.

THE HAPPY WARRIOR

This is one of Wordsworth's various essays in heroic verse, one which owes its inspiration directly to public affairs. Nelson's tragic victory and death at Trafalgar in October 1805 had stirred national emotion profoundly. Within a few months of this event Wordsworth wrote this poem, drawing upon the character of Nelson for certain of the virtues he sets forth.

ODE ON THE INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY

In this ode Wordsworth dwells upon a metaphysical speculation in respect of the human soul, a speculation as old as Plato, and, by the force of passion and imagination, lifts it to a noble level of lyrical expression. His function is that not of a theologian preaching a doctrine, but of an artist fashioning to beauty a purely poetic conception. Wordsworth's handling of this theme may advantageously be contrasted with the methods of didactic poets of the preceding century. This poem may also be considered in the light of the following opinions of Wordsworth expressed in his preface to the *Lyrical Ballads*:

1. "For all good poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings."

2. "There will be found in these volumes little of what is usually called poetic diction; as much pains has been taken to avoid it as is ordinarily taken to produce it."

3. "It may be safely affirmed, that there neither is, nor can be, any essential difference between the language of prose and metrical composition."

4. "Poetry is the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge; it is the impassioned expression which is in the countenance of all Science."

5. "Poetry takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquillity."

CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE

34. *Paphian girls*, mere pleasure-seekers, so named from Paphos, a town in Cyprus sacred to Venus.

52. *Eros*, the god of love. *feere*, a consort, a companion.

72. *Paynim*, pagan, infidel.

79. *Thermopylæ*, the pass which Leonidas and 300 Spartans heroically defended against the invading Persian army in 480 B.C. Of the defenders all were slain but one.

- 81. *Eurotas*, the chief river of Lacedæmonia.
- 82. *Phyle*, a precipitous hill overlooking Athens.
- 83. *Thrasybulus*, an Athenian general who expelled the Thirty Tyrants from Athens in 401 B.C.
- 106. *Helots*, slaves in ancient Sparta.
- 120. *Tritonia's shrine*, the temple of Pallas.
- 130. *Hymettus*, a mountain near Athens, famed for its bees and honey.
- 144. *Marathon*, a plain in Attica, where the Persian army was defeated by the Athenians in 490 B.C.
- 296. *winged Lion*, the emblem of Venice.
- 298. *Cybele*, the mother of the gods.
- 307. *Tasso*, an Italian poet (1544-95).
- 319. *dogeless*, Venice was ruled by Doges, or Dukes, till 1797.
- 322. *Pierre*, the principal character in Otway's *Venice Preserved*.

THE EVE OF ST AGNES

- 70. *amort*, rapt, unconscious of what was going on around her.
- 117. *St Agnes' wool*, "that shorn from two lambs which were upon that day brought to Mass and offered while the *Agnus* was chanted. The wool was then spun, dressed, and woven by the hand of nuns" (Palgrave).
- 171. *Merlin*. Keats apparently assumes that Merlin sold his soul to the Demon in return for his magic power.
- 198. *fray'd*, frightened.
- 218. *gules*, a term used in heraldry for the colour red.
- 257. *Morphean amulet*, a charm that will induce sleep.

ADONAIS

The following is taken from Shelley's preface to *Adonais*:

John Keats died at Rome of a consumption, in his twenty-fourth year. . . .

The genius of the lamented person to whose memory I have dedicated these unworthy verses was not less delicate and fragile than it was beautiful; and where cankerworms abound, what wonder if its young flower was blighted in the bud? The savage criticism on his *Endymion*, which appeared in the *Quarterly Review*, produced the most violent effect on his susceptible mind; the agitation thus originated ended in the rupture of a blood-vessel in the lungs; a rapid consumption ensued, and the succeeding acknowledgments from more candid critics of the true greatness of his powers were ineffectual to heal the wound thus wantonly inflicted.

It may be well said that these wretched men know not what they do. They scatter their insults and their slanders without heed as to whether the poisoned shaft lights on a heart made callous by many blows or one like Keats's composed of more penetrable stuff. . . . As to *Endymion*, was it a poem, whatever might be its defects, to be treated contemptuously by those who had celebrated, with various degrees of complacency and panegyric, *Paris*, and *Woman*, and a *Syrian Tale*, and Mrs Lefanu, and Mr Barrett, and Mr Howard Payne, and a long list of the illustrious obscure? What gnat did they strain at here, after having swallowed all those camels?

- 10. *mighty Mother*, Urania, one of the nine Muses.
- 11. *the shaft*, the attacks of anonymous critics.
- 29. *He*, John Milton, whom Shelley, in his *A Defence of Poetry*, places third to Homer and Dante as an epic poet.
- 55. *that high Capital*, Rome.
- 133. *for whose disdain*, that of Narcissus, for whose love Echo pined away until nothing remained of her but her voice.
- 160. *brere*, briar.
- 250. *The Pythian of the age*. Byron, his *Hours of Idleness* having been adversely criticized, struck back with his "one arrow" in *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*.
- 264. *The Pilgrim of Eternity*, Byron, the poet having in mind especially his *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*.
- 269. *The sweetest lyrist*, Thomas Moore.
- 271. *one frail Form*, Shelley.
- 276. *Actæon*, a huntsman who, having offended Diana, was changed into a stag, and was killed by his own hounds.
- 307. *What softer voice*. The most commonly accepted opinion is that Shelley here meant Leigh Hunt.
- 381. *plastic stress*, the shaping and moulding energy of the divine spirit.
- 399. *Chatterton*, Thomas Chatterton (1752-70), to whom Keats dedicated his *Endymion*, describing him as "the most English of poets except Shakespeare." He committed suicide.
- 401. *Sidney*, Sir Philip Sidney, whose literary career was full of high promise. He died of wounds at Zutphen in 1586.
- 404. *Lucan*, the Latin poet, author of *Pharsalia*. Having taken part in a conspiracy against the Emperor Nero, he was put to death in A.D. 65, at the age of twenty-six.
- 416. *Fond wretch*, apparently Shelley himself.
- 417-421. "Let your spirit conceive the limitless magnitude of time and space in the universe, and in the infinite void beyond; and then think of the limited littleness of man's brief hours of life."

THE LOTOS-EATERS

- 23. *galingale*, a species of sedge, yielding an aromatic root.
- 133. *amaranth*, a mythical flower supposed never to fade. *moly*, a mythical herb possessing certain magical virtues.
- 170. *asphodel*, supposed to be identical with the narcissus.

PIPPA PASSES

- 88. *martagon*, a lily which bears a purplish red flower.
- 234-235. "What costs it to bestow gifts that would relieve her need? A mere matter of cleaving the earth or parting the seas for her sake!"
- 240. *jesses*, short straps secured round the leg of the hawk to which the leash was attached.
- 242. *dray*, the nest of a mouse or squirrel.